

HOW LONDON IS GOVERNED

By HERBERT MORRISON



SOCIALISATION AND TRANSPORT (1933)

LOOKING AHEAD (1944)

THE PEACEFUL REVOLUTION (1949)

THE RIGHT HON.
HERBERT MORRISON

HOW LONDON IS GOVERNED

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To the Citizens of London

Preface to First Edition

APART from Sir Percy Harris's useful volume, *The Government of London*, there is, I think, no book in handy form which adequately explains the London system of local government.

Most of the works on British local government on a national basis give quite inadequate attention to London. Sir Percy Harris's book, last published in 1931, made a different approach from that of the present volume, and the machinery of local government in Extra London was rather outside its scope.

It has been my aim in the following pages to describe the powers and organisation of the many classes of local authorities in Greater London, and not only within the area of the London County Council. The book also deals with the *ad hoc* authorities—the special bodies for special purposes; a grasp of their work is essential to an understanding of public administration in the vast area of Greater London. I have aimed at taking the reader “behind the scenes”, particularly of the London County Council. Inevitably that great authority, with its exceptionally extensive powers and responsibilities, occupies a big place in these pages. The rather full explanation given of its procedure will, however, help the reader to understand that of local authorities generally.

The chapter on Quarter Sessions was not essential, but as the Justices were, with the Metropolitan Board of Works, the immediate administrative predecessors

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of the London County Council and still have a link with the Council and a place in London local affairs, the chapter was considered relevant. The final chapter attempts a picture of London local government as it might have been.

The appendices should not be ignored: I think they will be found of value. The first contains important advice given by the London Labour Party Executive to Municipal Labour Parties; much of the counsel contained in the memorandum should be of value to members of local authorities generally. Appendix II contains a list of London public authorities with their addresses. The third appendix is an A B C of functions and authorities; often the London householder, business man or journalist becomes concerned with a particular branch of public administration but does not know which authority it comes under; this appendix will, I trust, help the bewildered citizen out of his worries. If he does not know the authority's address, the second appendix will tell him. Appendix IV sets out the more important statistics for Greater London.

My sincere thanks are due to the officers of a wide range of public authorities for great assistance in the realm of fact. Miss E. M. Donald has given considerable help in the preparation of the MS. and the collection of material; and Mr. D. H. Daines has kindly assisted in the checking of the proofs and in other ways. That wonderful volume, *London Statistics*, published annually by the London County Council, has been a source of material aid. The author alone is responsible for the opinions which occur in these pages. Opinions are expressed in this book, for it is neither a legal treatise nor a heavy textbook; they are, however, the opinions of an administrator as to what

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he conceives to be good administration rather than those of a party politician; indeed some of the views will be by no means universally accepted in the party of which the author is a member.

I have long wanted to write such a book as this, but a busy life has prevented its earlier accomplishment. Well, here it is. I hope it will be useful.

H. M.

THE COUNTY HALL,
LONDON.

Preface to Second (Revised) Edition

SOMEHOW or other I have found time to revise this book which was first published in 1935 under the title *How Greater London is Governed*. My task would have been utterly impossible without the extremely valuable assistance of Mr. F. T. Barrett, a former Assistant Clerk of the London County Council, and now in his retirement Chairman of the Letcombe Bassett Parish Meeting, which must be a pleasant experience of voluntary public work in relation to the smallest unit of local government, after having held a responsible official position under the greatest municipal authority in the world. I am very grateful to him for the work he has put into this new edition.

The general structure and argument of the first edition remain, but what has impressed itself on my mind, as the work proceeded, is the considerable changes not in the structure of local government in Greater London, but the changes in the powers and functions of the various authorities. A new chapter deals with central *v.* local administration. I have also added a chapter on civil defence, based on the experience of the last war. The chapter on local government finance has had to be altered considerably; and, in its present form, should interest the economist. The task of bringing it up to date was greatly eased through the able assistance of Mr. A. R. Wood, the Comptroller of the London County Council.

The book is non-party political, its purpose being to

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explain to the citizen and all those engaged in local government how local administration functions in this vast area. I have sought (I cannot say with what success) to make the book interesting and easy to follow, whilst preserving its character as a useful text-book in this field.

There is recorded in the pages of this book a great deal of my personal opinions on various aspects of public administration which was perhaps inevitable, having regard to my own direct experience on a considerable number of administrative bodies in the Metropolis. I should wish to make it clear, however, that for any opinions expressed in the book I alone am responsible; and they should not be laid at the door either of the Government, of which I am a member, or of Mr. Barrett.

H. M.

What is This London and Who are These Londoners?

No city in the world is more famous than London. The name brings to the minds of all a place outstanding in history, a great centre of commerce, the seat of government of a great nation, the capital city of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

The children of the world, early in their school lives, know of the existence of London. And yet London is a vague term. I doubt whether 5 per cent. of the people of London could successfully pass a simple examination on what London is, and the nature of the several Londons that exist. I say this with regret.

Nevertheless, Londoners have some excuse for being vague about the nature of the great city in which they live—if I am right in calling it a city. In my own view the Metropolis or London proper is the Administrative County of London, the area of the London County Council, comprising the ancient City of London and the twenty-eight Metropolitan Boroughs. But I may be corrected by some enthusiastic citizen of the ancient City who may be disposed to claim that the only real London is the square mile at the centre, the local authority for which is the City of London Corporation, the centre whence the vast sprawl of Greater London grew. On the other hand, I am just as likely to be pulled up by some of the residents beyond the County boundary who will warmly dispute my claim

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that London proper is the Administrative County of London and will assert that they who live in Extra or Outer London are just as much Londoners as I who live within the Administrative County. I will not argue. Instead, I will introduce the reader, very briefly, to the fifteen or more Londons of which I am aware, and leave the Londoner (if he is one!) to choose for himself.

§ *The Various Londons*

First historically, in civic splendour and the fight for civic liberty, is the area of the City Corporation, the square mile of the City of London, stretching from Temple Bar, Fleet Street, in the West, to Aldgate in the East, and from Aldersgate in the North down to the Thames on its southern boundary. In 1947 it had an estimated night population of 5,490 and (at the 1921 census) a day population of 436,721. With its great history and its Lord Mayor, Sheriffs, Aldermen and Common Council, it is the most glittering of British municipalities, even though the municipal powers of the Corporation are materially less than those of a provincial County Borough.

The Administrative County of London—the area of the London County Council—includes the City and the twenty-eight Metropolitan Boroughs. It stretches from Abbey Wood and Poplar in the East, to Putney and Hammersmith in the West; from Finsbury Park in the North to the Crystal Palace in the South. It has an area of nearly 117 square miles and an estimated population in 1947 of 3,328,340. Apart from the *ad hoc* authorities, the local government of this great area is shared between the London County Council, the City of London Corporation and the twenty-eight Metropolitan Borough Councils, and within the County

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there also exist a certain number of special authorities. Among these are the Masters of the Benches of the Inner and Middle Temples who, within their areas, discharge certain minor duties which belong to local authorities outside, although it is doubtful whether in the world of local government the Temples have any precise legal position. The twenty-nine Assessment Committees are formed from among the members of the City of London Corporation and each of the twenty-eight Metropolitan Borough Councils, but once appointed they have no responsibility to the appointing authority; to each of the Assessment Committees of the Metropolitan Boroughs is appointed one representative of the London County Council. These committees will cease to function in 1951. So much for the bodies functioning exclusively within the Administrative County of London. We will now take a glance at the no-man's-land of Extra (i.e. Outer) London.

Here we shall find a number of special authorities which function within and without London County.

First of all we see that the area catered for by the main drainage system of the London County Council consists of 179 square miles as compared with the 117 of the Administrative County, for no fewer than eighteen local authorities outside the Council's area have found it convenient to make arrangements to use the Council's drainage system; this brings the London County Council's "main drainage" population up by one million to 4,307,750.

"Water London" is the area of the Metropolitan Water Board, covering 575.8 square miles with a population of over 7½ millions, but actually supplying 6,244,900 (estimated 1946). The irregular area covered

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by the Board defines ready description, a condition arising from the fact that it is the heir of the eight Metropolitan water companies.

The Metropolitan Police District covers 692 square miles with a population of 8,384,200. It extends from Coulsdon in the South to Cheshunt in the North, and from Uxbridge in the West to Dagenham and Crayford in the East. The Metropolitan and City Police Districts—the recognised Greater London area—together comprise 692.9 square miles and have a population of 8,389,680.

“Greater London”, as thus defined, is now an anachronism. The boundaries of the Metropolitan Police District were fixed 100 years ago and remained unchanged until 1st April, 1947. The recent revision affected boundaries on the fringe, and involved an increase of 27,336 acres. Development has proceeded unevenly in the area, with the result that while, for example, a town like Watford in the N.W., closely linked to London, is not in Greater London, Orpington in the S.E., loosely linked, is well within. The Registrar General gives vital statistics for this area, which more and more people call “London”.

Even this great area, however, has been surpassed by some of the regional territories recognised for other purposes. The *London* Traffic Area has 1,820 square miles, and a population of 9,000,000. This is the area of traffic regulation under the London and Home Counties Traffic Advisory Committee and the Minister of Transport. The *Metropolitan* Traffic Area for the licensing of public service vehicles is much bigger, covering 2,415 square miles, with a population of 9,500,000. The London Passenger Transport Area of the London Transport Executive is different again, having a square mileage of 1,975, with a

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population of 9,700,000. The limits of the London Passenger Transport Area are roughly Luton, Baldock and Bishop's Stortford in the North, Horsham and East Grinstead in the South, Brentwood and Tilbury in the East, and High Wycombe and Windsor in the West. This area was settled by the London Passenger Transport Act, 1933, as a natural passenger transport area, but it was influenced in part by the territories predominantly covered by certain transport undertakings.

The limits of the Port of London—the area of the Port of London authority—extend from Teddington in the West to the sea in the East.

The new London Electricity Board's area is 257 square miles, and has a population of 6,273,000.

These are the principal Londons looked at from the local government view-point. There are others, including the Central Criminal Court district, the London, County Court area, the London postal district and the London telecommunications region, but these have no local government significance, and, in any case, I have quoted enough to prove that the term "London" is one of the vaguest in common use.

Within Extra London alone there function the five County Councils of Essex, Herts, Kent, Middlesex and Surrey, these County Councils having powers materially different from, and as a whole smaller than, those of the London County Council. In addition, there are wholly or partly within the Extra London area three County Borough Councils, and thirty-six non-County Borough Councils; twenty-six Urban District Councils; three Rural District Councils; and three Parish Councils.* Altogether, apart from the *ad hoc* or indirectly elected authorities, there function within the Greater London of the Metropolitan and

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City Police Districts no fewer than 106 directly elected local authorities. They include every one of the categories of local authorities to be found in the local government system of England and Wales. For variety and multiplicity of local authorities, Greater London would take a lot of beating.

The system of local government in the London County area is different from that obtaining in Extra London.

§ *The People of London*

And now, having realised the great difficulty of deciding what London is, if we ask ourselves who the Londoners are, and what are their common temperamental and other characteristics, the reply must be even less definite. The proportion of pure Londoners living in the Metropolis is difficult to estimate. Migration from other parts of the country is continuous, apart from the now restricted immigration of people from other lands. Almost every conceivable accent is to be met with in London: the rising intonations of the Welsh, the rolling r's of the Scots, the rich brogue of the Irish, the accents of the north-east coast, which the Cockney finds so difficult to understand, the clear-cut consonants of Lancashire and Yorkshire, the easy-going speech of East Anglia, and the accents of the Midlands and the West of England. All are to be found in this London of my birth.

After the first generation of immigrants, the non-London accent is unfortunately lost, but even the speech of the generally accepted Londoner conforms to no common standard. Class, district, education and personal temperament—even type of employment—have their effect. More or less, we all speak the King's English in London, but we speak it with differing voices

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and differing pronunciations. I suppose we are rather a careless lot in our modes of speech, although the better educated are a growing proportion and the children from the elementary schools speak with reasonable correctness—at any rate in school! I like the differing accents of the British, all of which are to be found in the capital city. As long as it is natural, there is charm to be found in everybody's mode of speech, including the emphatic pronunciation of the East-end Cockney.

So we see that there is no London stock, no standard London speech—there is no common London type. Our origins and our characteristics are very mixed. There is no common boundary to this vague, sprawling city of ours, and, possibly in consequence, we cannot boast of a high degree of corporate, civic patriotism, although I hope that some of us are causing that to develop. Yet we are proud to be London citizens—even if our origins *are* doubtful!—and there is something of an uncertain community of spirit between us. We have changed a great deal during the present century, probably as a consequence of the development of mechanical science, the growing rush of life in this vast Metropolis, and the intensification of motor transport. We are “all there”, because we have got to be “all there” in the rush and scurry of London life.

So I am not sure what London is. I am not sure who the Londoners are. But I love London; I love the Londoners. I have a quiet pride in the fact that both my parents were East-enders.

And when all is said and done, there *is* a London; there *are* Londoners. There is something of a London corporate spirit. Perhaps one cannot logically prove these assertions. But I make them and believe in their truth.

The Ancient City: The Lord Mayor

LONDON's first civic authority was that of the City of London.¹ That is where the great sprawl now known as Greater London began. The date of the establishment of the Corporation and the manner of its creation appear to be uncertain, for the most that the City authorities could say in their evidence to the Royal Commission on London Government in 1921 was that the "origin of the Corporation of the City of London goes back beyond legal memory, although the term 'corporation' does not appear to have come into use until the middle of the eighteenth century". The City of London played a great part in checking the absolutism of kings and in establishing municipal government on a democratic basis. The vindication of parliamentary rights owes much to the City Corporation.

The rights of the City of London rest upon the Charter of William the Conqueror, which is better described as a Treaty. The citizens of London fought William. He defeated them and forced their chief, called the *Stallholder*, to retire sorely wounded into the City; but the City remained unconquered. William thereupon entered into a Treaty and gave the citizens

¹ For much of the historical and other facts about the City Corporation I am indebted to the authorities at Guildhall; to *Local Government Law and Administration*, edited by Lord Macmillan; and to Mr. John Betts, the well-informed correspondent of *The Times* and for some time Editor of *The City Press*; but they are not responsible for any opinions expressed.

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a Charter, in which he promised that they should maintain their former rights and privileges. In consequence of this Treaty, whenever the citizens claimed rights and privileges the Norman kings said, in effect, "Tell us what you claim", and the claims were embodied in various Charters.¹

The Corporation's rights and privileges were thus acquired, but tradition, practice, and purchase from needy monarchs were factors in their development. The City's evidence to the Royal Commission stated:

"The City enjoys privileges and franchises which can neither be lost by forfeiture nor voluntarily surrendered. Throughout the early history of the City, and its Charters, there is the amplest evidence that for most, if not all, of these, and for the greater part of the rights and privileges enjoyed by the Citizens, due and full pecuniary consideration has been given."

It is stated by the same authority that Alfred the Great appointed an Alderman as the City's first municipal Governor in the person of Ethelred in A.D. 886, and it is suggested that "to Alfred may be not unreasonably attributed the foundation of the Municipality of London".

In addition to the rights and privileges referred to above, the Corporation has derived various powers and rights from Acts of Parliament. But the corporate character of the City was not created by Charter or Parliamentary enactment, for even the first Charter, that of William I, confirmed privileges in existence rather than granted new ones.

¹ See Gomme on *Governance of London*.

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§ *Area and Population*

Although formerly the citizens appointed a Sheriff for the County of Middlesex and nominated a Justiciar, the Corporation area has remained substantially the same throughout its existence, namely, 677 acres or one square mile. The night, or resident, population has consistently fallen since 1851, when it was 127,819 as compared with 10,999 in 1931, and an estimated population of 5,490 in 1947. The population was even greater at the first census in 1801, but there were small ups and downs between 1801 and 1851. It was probably greater still before 1801. A considerable proportion of the present night population consists of caretakers and others whose employment requires them to live in the City. These figures of night population, however, are treated with scant respect by the City authorities, who insist that it is the day population which indicates the real importance of the City of London, particularly as a mercantile and commercial centre. The Corporation, therefore, went to the expense of a day census on April 25th, 1911, when the day population was found to be 364,061 (as compared with 301,384 in 1891) made up as follows:

Employers	...	...	...	...	34,425
Employees (Males)	...	...	...	...	247,984
Employees (Females)	...	...	...	...	69,772
Children (under 15 years of age)	...	...	...	...	11,880

Total ... 364,061

The day population, according to the City census, was about 200,000 in 1866 and 261,061 in 1881, while

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the Government census of 1921 revealed it as 436,721; no count was taken in the Government census of 1931.

There is, of course, point in the significance attached to the day population, for the City could not possess the commercial importance it does unless this population was a considerable one; but the Corporation went rather far when it described its day population to the Royal Commission of 1921 as the “Daily Resident Population of the City”.

§ *What the Corporation is*

The word “citizens” in the City of London does not necessarily mean the rated inhabitants or occupiers. In the old days it meant those who had acquired citizenship by right or by purchase and who were in “Scot and lot”. Such money went to the orphan fund. The City organisation included a number of Guilds. A boy on arriving at fourteen was apprenticed to a member of a Guild. This was (and still is) done at the Hall before the Master and Wardens, and the lad became subject in case of need to their control and, through them, to the control of the Chamberlain. Later the lad became a member or yeoman of the Guild and then a “freeman”. At this stage he took up the freedom of the City at Guildhall, the Chamberlain extending the right hand of fellowship and greeting him as citizen of London. After this he could be “clothed in the Livery” by his Guild and became a fully fledged citizen of London, with the right of attending and voting in Common Hall. In the middle of the last century the “freedom” was brought within the reach of all inhabitants and workers on payment at Guildhall. To-day, side by side with admission to citizenship through the Guilds, “citizenship” may be acquired

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without becoming member of a Guild; but this does not entitle him to attend Common Hall.

The elective franchise, which was originally confined to the freemen, is now much wider in its scope. The general body of citizens and ratepayers many of whom are not technically citizens, together with the Liverymen, are brought together and consulted on certain matters. Indeed, in form, some of the City practices are more democratic, in the older sense of the term, than has been found practicable or expedient in the more modern forms of local government. For example, Common Hall, once described as the Chief Court of the Citizens, is a gathering of Liverymen (who must, of course, be freemen); it elects the Sheriffs, the Chamberlain (the principal financial officer and Treasurer) and other officers on June 24th, and nominates two of the qualified Aldermen for the Mayoralty on September 29th.

In each of the wards on St. Thomas's Day (December 21st) the Wardmote meets for the election of common councilmen and ward officers. Electors must be residents, or in occupation of premises of an annual gross value of £10. Wardmotes are also held for the election of Aldermen who, once elected, hold office for life, subject to certain disqualifications. When vacancies arise the Wardmote is convened on a precept of the Lord Mayor. In the case of disagreement a poll may be demanded.

§ *The Lord Mayor*

The Mayoralty of the City of London appears to have been first mentioned in April, 1193. The holder of this high office is known as the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor of London, the terms "Lord" and

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“Right Honourable” being courtesy titles dating respectively from the early fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. There is still doubt about the date, but there is evidence to show that the Mayor was by virtue of his position a Lord. He was certainly Lord of the Manors in Southwark, and the title was doubtless accorded long before it found its way into the records. In strictly official documents the Lord Mayor is still designated Mayor only. There has never been a Lord in the City other than the Lord Mayor—no Duke, as in Westminster, owning the land. The City owns large estates (Corporation, Guilds and Church); there are comparatively few private freeholders.

The Livery on September 29th returns two candidates out of such Aldermen as have already served the office of Sheriff, and of these the Court of Aldermen selects one for the mayoralty. The two senior Aldermen are usually nominated, but the Livery occasionally exercises the power of choosing other qualified Aldermen. The Lord Mayor-Elect is presented to the Lord Chancellor for the approval of the Sovereign, and is admitted to his office on November 9th before the Justices of the High Court acting for the Sovereign.¹ Then follows the Lord Mayor’s Show. In the City he takes precedence of every subject of the realm, including Princes of the Blood Royal; even the King, to whom alone he is second, does not visit the City in State without formal notification and a ceremonial admission at Temple Bar or one of the other entrances to the ancient walled capital.

The Courts of Aldermen and Common Council and

¹ By charters of May 9th, 1215, June 12th, 1253, Stat. (1750), 24 Geo. 2, c. 48, S. II; Stat. (1751), 25 Geo. 2, c. 30, s. 4; Supreme Court of Judicature Act 1925.

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the Common Hall are summoned and presided over by the Lord Mayor; they cannot meet other than by his permission and direction; he also controls the agenda and appoints a substitute to preside over the proceedings in his absence.

The Lord Mayor is the Chief Magistrate for the City, being the first named in the Commissions of Oyer and Terminer and Gaol Delivery at the Central Criminal Court (the Old Bailey). These quaint terms, Oyer and Terminer, signify the functions of hearing and determining cases; the Lord Mayor is the First Commissioner of Assize. He conducts the Court of Summary Jurisdiction at the Mansion House.

The Lord Mayor receives £12,500 a year from "City Cash" towards his expenses, but he spends much more, the difference coming from his private resources.

§ *The Sheriffs*

The two Sheriffs of the City of London who, as already said, are elected by the citizens in Common Hall, hold offices of even greater antiquity than any other in the City, although it is well not to be dogmatic. Their predecessors in office—"wic-reeve" and "reeves" of London charged with the King's authority over the citizens—were mentioned in Anglo-Saxon laws as early as the seventh century.

The Sheriffs usually accompany the Lord Mayor on his public appearances and are closely associated with him in his charitable activities. They have certain other rights and duties in connection with the Sovereign, Parliament and the Central Criminal Court. They receive between them an allowance of £740 a year, but the expenses of the office are substantially in excess of this sum.

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§ *The Court of Aldermen*

From the thirteenth to the seventeenth centuries, the Court of Aldermen was mainly responsible for the administrative functions of civic government in the City; the Court consists of the Lord Mayor and the twenty-five other Aldermen, representing the wards, whose election must be approved by the Court itself.

The Court deals with a number of matters of administration, including the control of the Livery Companies, the recognition of new Livery Companies and the admission to the Freedom through the companies, the admission of special constables, and the approval of rules and regulations under the City Police Act, 1839, the Metropolitan Streets Act, 1867, and the City of London (Street Traffic) Act, 1909. The Court can order payments out of the City Cash, an important fund principally arising from the Corporation's ownership of much land and partly as the result of private beneficence; the use of the City Cash is subject to none of the usual legal restrictions which affect local authority finance, but the accounts are audited by accountants appointed by the Livery in Common Hall.

The Aldermen are also Justices of Oyer and Terminer and Gaol Delivery at the Central Criminal Court, and Justices of the Peace; the discharge of these judicial functions now, perhaps, constitutes their main activities as Aldermen.

§ *The Common Council*

The nearest analogy to an ordinary municipal council in the City is the Court of Common Council. Like

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the Court of Aldermen it had its origin in the Court of Hustings which, as in the case of Quarter Sessions before the Local Government Act, 1888, was a deliberative as well as a judicial assembly. I am informed by the Town Clerk that:

“The oath of the Commune of London, 1193, gives evidence of decisions by a body of *probi homines*, or reputable men, which the citizens as a whole were expected to observe, and other references of A.D. 1200–1 and 1205–6, must be interpreted as relating to committees of that body. Throughout the thirteenth century there are many signs that the Aldermen were aided in their government of the city by the counsel of selected representatives of the citizens. About 1285 or 1286 occurs a first list of names of *probi homines* ‘of all the wards sworn to consult with the Aldermen on common affairs of the City of London’. Such lists become more frequent in the next century, during which successive enactments of the commonalty placed the Common Council on a regular and permanent footing. As regards constitution, the Common Council has altered little since 1384.”

The Court of Common Council, judged by modern municipal standards, is large, but historical and other considerations make it pointless to be contentious about these matters.

At the present time the Common Council is composed of the Lord Mayor, twenty-five Aldermen and 206 Common Councilmen, making a total of 232 persons to administer the local affairs of the City's square mile as compared with the 150 members who are responsible for the infinitely heavier work of the London County Council over an area (including the City) of 117 square miles; but the two bodies are hardly comparable.

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Although originally a consultative body, the Common Council, before the end of the fourteenth century, had become the "legislative" assembly for the City, its consent being necessary in all matters concerning civic taxation and the lands and revenues of the Corporation. To-day the Common Council is, with the aid of its committees, the principal governing body of the City; it has retained what are described as its legislative powers and it now wields the major part of the executive and administrative functions which were earlier discharged by the Court of Aldermen. It would appear that there is some analogy in the growth of general powers through financial control between the House of Commons and the Court of Common Council.

The following is a list of the Committees of the Corporation:

Standing Committees with the uniform composition of Chairman, 6 aldermen and 29 commoners.

City Lands.	Police.
Bridge House Estates.	Port of London Health.
Coal and Corn and Finance.	County Purposes.
Rates Finance.	Library.
Improvements and Town Planning.	City of London Schools.
Streets.	Freemen's School.
Public Health.	Music.
Central Markets.	General Purposes.
Cattle Markets.	Officers and Clerks.
Billingsgate and Leadenhall Markets.	Law and City Courts.
Spitalfields Market.	Civil Defence.
	Airport.

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Other Committees composed differently numerically and, in some cases, with outside representatives.

Special (the Policy Committee).	Elementary Education.
Irish Society.	Valuation.
Gresham.	Privileges.
Epping Forest.	Special (Labour).
West Ham Park.	Corporation Benevolent.

§ *Officers of the Corporation*

The principal officers of the London County Council are known as chief officers, but in the City they are known as high officers. They—with the exception of the Commissioner of the City Police¹—hold very ancient offices, and it is partly for this reason that in formal precedence they stand in front of the more modern municipal officers of the City whose executive responsibilities may, nevertheless, be heavier.

The Recorder is recognised as the principal officer of the Corporation. He is the senior law officer, the principal judge of the Central Criminal Court, and a lawyer of standing, and is prominent on ceremonial occasions. He is appointed by the Court of Aldermen for life, and his appointment has to be approved by the Sovereign.

The Chamberlain is Treasurer of the City and has care of the City Cash and the Corporation funds. He is the registrar of freemen and holds a court existing since 1299 for determining differences between masters and apprentices.

¹ The view is held, however, that the City Police Commissioner is really the successor of the ancient City Marshals who were, to some extent, military officers as well as policemen.

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The Town Clerk, or common clerk, was mentioned in A.D. 1275 as principal clerk of the City, the holder of the office then being Ralph Crepyn, afterwards an Alderman and representative in Parliament. The Town Clerk is appointed by the Common Council, and discharges most of the important duties commonly associated with this office in local government.

The Common Serjeant assists the Recorder as a judge at the Central Criminal Court, and is one of the judges of the Mayor's and City of London Court: he is a law officer of the Corporation; he discharges important duties at Common Hall, and attends the Courts of Aldermen and Common Council; he represents the City on various public and ceremonial occasions.

The Judge of the Mayor's and City of London Court is a commissioner at the Central Criminal Court, and acts as a judge of the amalgamated court on the county court side, besides being available to take actions remitted from the High Court.

The Assistant Judge has duties analogous to a county court judge.

The Commissioner of the Police, subject in a number of respects to the directions of the Court of Common Council, discharges duties in the City of London analogous to those of the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis.

The Comptroller of the Chamber and the Bridge House Estates, with which has recently been amalgamated the office of City Solicitor. He is described as the general steward and conveyancer of the Corporation. He is a law officer and has a number of duties in connection with the conveyancing work and estate management of the Corporation. As Solicitor, he is in charge of legal business and conducts litigation.

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The Remembrancer, whose office was created in 1570, is the parliamentary officer of the Corporation. He attends Parliament and reports all Parliamentary business which affects the City; in this connection he has the privilege of a seat under the gallery of the House of Commons. In addition, however, he has many ceremonial duties related to the Corporation's privileges, its relations with the Sovereign and Parliament, and with the arrangements for the Corporation's public hospitality.

Among the officers who are not designated high officers are the *Secondary*, who deals with voting lists and elections; the *Medical Officer of Health*, who holds what is clearly an important office; the *Coroner* (the right to appoint whom in 1478 cost the City £7,000!), who conducts fire as well as other inquests; the *Clerk of the Peace*; the *City Surveyor*; the *Engineer*; the *Sword Bearer*; the *Common Cryer and Serjeant-at-Arms*; and the *City Marshal*.

§ *The City and the County*

The City Corporation is in status both a city and a county. Thus it is that the County of London comprises the twenty-eight Metropolitan Boroughs, but not the City; the Administrative County of London—the whole L.C.C. area—comprises both the City and the twenty-eight Boroughs. Nevertheless, many of the functions which are discharged, for example, by the City Council of the County Borough of Manchester are in the City of London discharged by the London County Council and not the Corporation. These include the important services of education (other than the schools mentioned below), licensing of public entertainments, fire brigade and main drainage. On certain

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other matters—for example, housing and parks—the Corporation has concurrent powers with the Council, but it does not appear to be its intention to undertake new direct liabilities. In fact, it contributes to the County rate for such services.

County Council services to which the City does not financially contribute are the special county services, of which the more important are coroners, the upkeep of certain minor bridges, the accident ambulance service, deficiencies arising under certain Housing Acts (notably that of 1919), and the majority of regulative services, e.g., inspection of weights and measures, shops, massage establishments, employment agencies, and dangerous structures.

The gross expenditure of the London County Council in 1945-6 was £48,455,088, as compared with £2,847,778 by the City Corporation for its own purposes.

In 1945-46 the City contributed approximately one-ninth of the total (£18,487,850) raised by the L.C.C. by precept on the City and the Boroughs. Although the City contributes more than any Borough, except Westminster, towards L.C.C. expenditure, it receives less services from the Council than any other.

The City has powers which are not possessed by any other local authority in Greater London; e.g., it is the police authority in its own area and it is the Port Health Authority for the whole of the Port of London. Water is, of course, under the Metropolitan Water Board. Many years ago the City owned its own water supply but, fearing to finance Middleton's New River scheme in the seventeenth century, it "went out of the business".

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§ *What the Corporation Does*

The field of civic administration for which the Corporation is responsible is as under.

Open Spaces. The City Corporation owns and maintains 6,703 acres of parks and open spaces, of which three acres are within the City, four are just outside the City, while the remainder, 6,705 acres, are outside, some well outside the London county boundary. The out-county spaces, in order of magnitude, are as follows:

	<i>Acres.</i>
Epping Forest	5,560
Burnham Beeches	492
Coulsdon, etc., Commons	401
West Ham Park	77
Highgate Woods	69
Spring Park	51
Queen's Park... ..	30
West Wickham Common	25
Total ...	6,705

The cost is met out of the City Cash (not rates) and represents a considerable contribution to the well-being of Greater London.

The Corporation has accepted the responsibility of maintaining St. Paul's Churchyard and Bunhill Fields, and has made substantial contributions towards the purchase of open spaces by other authorities.

The City Schools. These are hardly the usual educational institutions known to most local authorities, but are, in the main, the result of bequests, or grants from the City Cash. The schools are:

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The City of London School; '
The City of London School for Girls;
The Guildhall School of Music; and
The Freeman's School.

All of these educational institutions are substantially aided from City revenues.

Bridges. Built and maintained out of gifts and bequests of lands and moneys administered by the Bridge House Estates Committee of the Corporation, are:

Tower Bridge;
London Bridge;
Southwark Bridge; and
Blackfriars Bridge.

Markets. With certain exceptions, the City is the markets authority over a radius of seven miles, which is held by many to be anomalous in view of the restricted area of the City Corporation. The City markets are important and serve a wide area. They are:

Billingsgate (fish);
London Central (Smithfield) Markets (meat and poultry);
Metropolitan Cattle Market at Islington;
Leadenhall (poultry and game); and
Spitalfields (fruit and vegetables).

Other powers of the Corporation relate to:

Gas testing and examination;
Weights and measures inspection;
Administration of the Food and Drugs Acts and other aspects of public control; including shop hours;
Appointment of City Coroner;
The Police;
Port of London health work;

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Library, museum and art gallery;
Sanitary and certain public health services;
Improvements (but for most of the City improvements the Corporation applies for and usually obtains a grant from the London County Council);
Housing;
Highway maintenance, cleansing and lighting;
Refuse collection and disposal;
Cemetery and crematorium;
Valuation and rating.

These summarise what may be described as the municipal powers of the City.

Attached to the Corporation, however, there are a number of other institutions or functions, including the Irish Society which administers estates in Ulster, and the Royal Hospitals, recently taken over by the State, which are not common to municipal government elsewhere; indeed, they are not part of the work of the City's municipal administration as ordinarily understood.

The City Corporation prides itself on the absence of party politics in its work and deliberations, and there is substance in this claim. The Lord Mayor and Corporation have extended every courtesy to Labour representatives engaged in London local government. The City, however, is the City; on the whole its unpublished civic politics are Conservative, although a number of Liberals—and even, I believe, one or two Socialists of a discreet order—are, or have been, members of the Common Council, playing no mean part in its work.

Despite the fact that most of the people engaged in the public affairs of the City are Conservative in name or in fact, I never go to the Guildhall or the

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Mansion House without being conscious of that democratic and revolutionary past of the City of London Corporation to which the democracy of our local self-government and the rights of the people against kings and governments owe a great deal. I never speak in the City without reminding the members of the Corporation of that revolutionary past. And they almost seem to like it!

Quarter Sessions: London Justice¹

THE local administration of justice is now divorced from the organisation of local government, but the work of Quarter Sessions and the magistrates is within the general scope of this book. Moreover, historically, there is a close association between the Justice of the Peace and local government.

Section 1 of the Local Government Act, 1888, established a County Council in every Administrative County as defined by the Act, and section 3 transferred to the County Council of each County the administrative business formerly performed by the Justices of the County in Quarter Sessions assembled in respect of the matters set out in that section. It was an important change in the organisation of English local government.

Section 40 (1) provided that the Metropolis, that is to say, the area for which the old Metropolitan Board of Works had authority, should be an Administrative County by the name of "The Administrative County of London". Sub-section 2 provided that such portions of the new County as formed part of the Counties of Middlesex, Surrey, and Kent (which, of course, did not include the City) should be severed from those Counties and form a separate County for

¹ In the preparation of this chapter I was much assisted by material supplied by Mr. John Dix, then the Clerk of the Peace for the County of London. Mr. Leo Burgess, the present Clerk of the Peace, has helped in the revision.

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all non-administrative purposes by the name of "The County of London".

In the Counties in England and Wales the Clerk of the Peace became also the Clerk of the County Council, but in London the offices were severed; the Clerk of the London County Council was appointed by the Council, and the Clerk of the Peace, who was formerly Clerk of the Peace for the old County of Middlesex, continued as such, and became also the first Clerk of the Peace for the new County of London.

In Counties, other than London, the Justices, and subsequently (i.e. after the Act of 1888) the Standing Joint Committees of the County Council and Quarter Sessions had control of the County constabulary, except the area covered by the Metropolitan Police District.

The jurisdiction of the stipendiary magistrates of the Metropolis is exercised at fourteen Magistrates Courts, but as regards the Borough of Hampstead, part only of the area is within the Marylebone Magistrates Court district, the other part being under the jurisdiction of the Justices sitting as the Hampstead Magistrates Court under an unpaid Chairman elected by the Justices. In the provinces the stipendiary magistrate is the exception rather than the rule.

By Section 30 (1) of the Act of 1888 it is provided that there shall be a Standing Joint Committee consisting of an equal number of Justices appointed by Quarter Sessions and of members of the County Council appointed by the Council. In London the number of Members of the Standing Joint Committee is eighteen, nine being appointed by Quarter Sessions and nine by the County Council. The powers and duties of the Standing Joint Committee are set out in

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Section 30 (1); they are not very extensive, but in 1935 they were increased as a consequence of the London County Council delegating to the Committee licensing functions relating to dog-racing tracks under the Betting and Lotteries Act, 1934.

The Chairmen and Deputy Chairmen of Courts of Quarter Sessions in the country are as a rule not remunerated. In the County of London, however, the Chairman and Deputy Chairmen of the Court are paid £2,500 and £2,000 a year respectively. The Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Middlesex Sessions, who were formerly not remunerated, are paid an annual salary of £1,500 and £1,000 respectively. The Administration of Justice (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1938, deals with the legal qualifications of Chairmen, and at November, 1947, fifty-nine out of sixty-four Chairmen were "legally qualified".

The County of London (of which the City is not a part) is divided into sixteen Petty Sessional Divisions; until 1924 the boundaries followed the pre-London Government Act parish boundaries. In that year they were readjusted, and now each Petty Sessional Division or a group of such divisions coincides with one or more metropolitan boroughs. It should, however, be pointed out that within the boundary of the City of Westminster there are four Petty Sessional Divisions. For reference, a list of the divisions is set out at the end of this chapter.

Although there are only sixteen Petty Sessional Divisions in the County of London there are seventeen licensing districts, the seventeenth district being the Verge of the Palaces (273 acres with six on-licences), which is also wholly contained in the City of Westminster. The City of Westminster, therefore, com-

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prises exactly four Petty Sessional Divisions, but five liquor licensing districts. The Verge of the Palaces is in the licensing jurisdiction of the Lord Steward of His Majesty's Household—a survival certainly of four centuries.

Under the Licensing Act, 1904 (now the Licensing (Consolidation) Act, 1910), the Court of Quarter Sessions for the County are empowered to extinguish on-licences upon payment of compensation. This power has been delegated under the Act to a Committee appointed by the Court.

In 1904, there were in the County of London 7,058 on-licences. Of this number over 1,500 on-licences have been extinguished at a cost of more than £4,000,000, payable out of the compensation fund provided by the trade. Many other on-licences have disappeared, without compensation, from various causes, and the total existing in April 1948, was 5,050.

By the Criminal Justice Act, 1925, Petty Sessional Courts, if their own Quarter Sessions are not sitting within a month, are empowered to commit cases for trial to the Sessions for the County whose Sessions will be held before its own. Under this power cases are sent to these Sessions for trial from places in surrounding Counties. It has been pointed out from the London Court that this entails great hardship on juries attending the London Sessions by adding to the increasing volume of work transacted there.

The Summary Jurisdiction (Appeals) Act, 1933, enables poor persons to apply for, and obtain, a certificate for free legal aid, in respect of their appeals to Quarter Sessions from the decisions of stipendiary magistrates. The Legal Aid and Advice Bill, now before Parliament, seeks to enlarge these powers. The

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powers and duties' of the Court of Quarter Sessions in respect of these appeals is, in the case of a County other than London, delegated to and performed by a Committee of Justices appointed by Quarter Sessions, known as the Appeals Committee.

A special provision is made with regard to London. The powers and duties of that Court are performed by a panel of Justices consisting of the paid Chairman and paid Deputy Chairmen of the Court and one representative of each Petty Sessional Division within the County of London nominated annually, with power to the Chairman or Deputy Chairmen to sit and adjudicate alone.

The following shows the geographical distribution of the Petty Sessional Divisions of the County of London:

COUNTY OF LONDON

Petty Sessional Division.

Blackheath.

Finsbury.

Hampstead.

Hanover Square.

Holborn.

Kensington.

Boroughs.

Deptford.

Greenwich.

Lewisham.

Woolwich.

Finsbury.

Islington.

Hampstead.

City of Westminster.

(Part of, viz., the former Parish of St. George, Hanover Square, as it existed immediately prior to 1st April, 1922.)

Holborn.

Chelsea.

Fulham.

Hammersmith.

Kensington.

QUARTER SESSIONS: LONDON JUSTICE

Petty Sessional Division.

Newington.

Paddington.

St. James's.

St. Margaret's.

St. Marylebone.

St. Pancras.

Stoke Newington.

Strand.

Tower.

Wandsworth.

Boroughs.

Bermondsey.

Camberwell.

Lambeth.

Southwark.

Paddington.

City of Westminster.

(Part of, viz., the former Parish of St. Anne within the Liberty of Westminster and St. James, Westminster, as they existed immediately prior to 1st April, 1922.)

City of Westminster.

(Part of, viz., the area formerly known as The Close of the Collegiate Church of St. Peter and the former Parish of St. Margaret and St. John, as they existed immediately prior to 1st April, 1922.)

Saint Marylebone.

Saint Pancras.

Stoke Newington.

City of Westminster.

(Part of, viz., the former Parishes of St. Clement Danes, St. Martin-in-the-Fields, St. Mary le Strand, and the Precinct of the Savoy, St. Paul, Covent Garden, and the Liberty of the Rolls, as they existed immediately prior to 1st April, 1922.)

Bethnal Green.

Hackney.

Poplar.

Shoreditch.

Stepney.

Battersea.

Wandsworth.

It will be observed that within the boundary of the City of Westminster there are four Petty Sessional Divisions, namely, Hanover Square, St. James's, St. Margaret's, and Strand.

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Under Section 48 of the London County Council (General Powers) Act, 1948, the Council has power to prepare and submit to the Home Secretary a draft order under which petty sessional divisions may be re-organised. The Council is now preparing such a scheme.

County Hall : The Heart of London Government

AT what would be commonly known as the south-east corner of Westminster Bridge, but which is actually the north-east corner, stands on the banks of the Thames a massive building—always to me a beautiful and inspiring building—London's County Hall. It was opened by King George V in 1922, the final section being completed in 1933 and opened by Mr. Angus Scott (Sir Angus Scott), then Chairman of the Council. The cost in all, on completion, was £3,636,533, of which £620,911 was in respect of the site. The architect was Mr. Ralph Knott, associated with the Council's architect (Mr. W. E. Riley). It represents the beginning of a dignified development on the South side of the river, which is now (1949) taking definite shape.

The County Hall is a contrast to the Guildhall in the City, for the Guildhall inspires one with a sense of history, antiquity and tradition, whereas the County Hall gives one a sense of modernity and the pressing responsibilities of twentieth-century civic government. Gog and Magog, statues, and great oil paintings of the historic past have no place in the corridors of the County Hall. At most, there are in the lobbies of the Council Chamber and in the Conference Hall, the pictures of former Chairmen of the Council, some prints of old London, and one or two busts of former members which the Council has had some difficulty in placing. The weathered-oak corridors are free from

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ornamentation and obstruction. Instead of rich carpets there are clean, waxed and polished parquet floors.

On the ground floor there are luncheon rooms for the staff run by the Restaurants Department who also manage the members' refreshment room, charging the members commercial rates for whatever they eat and drink. Although members might look on the refreshment room as a club with a fine outlook over the river, practically the only reason for which they have luncheon or tea at the County Hall is to save time and to get through the greatest practicable amount of municipal hard labour.

Here and there about the corridors you will find groups of members who are discussing, not so much the pleasures and amenities of life, as some knotty problem they have met in committee. Or it may be a chief officer giving information to a member or settling some difficult point of administration with the chairman of a committee; or some little scheme of the opposition to put the majority party into difficulties at the next meeting of the Council; or efforts by the majority to do the same with the opposition, or at any rate to keep out of trouble themselves. As likely as not, however, it may be a mixed two or three or half a dozen of both parties seriously discussing a problem of common interest, or agreeing about the date of a committee meeting.

§ Municipality or a Parliamentary Government?

At the County Hall you get a feeling that there is no time to waste, or, so far as the leading members of the Council are concerned, for anything but hard work. For in this vast building—one of the corridors is well over a furlong in length—is to be found the

COUNTY HALL: HEART OF LONDON GOVERNMENT
heart of the civic administration of the vast Metro-
polis. It is the headquarters of the greatest municipality
in the world; indeed County Hall is almost the home
of a parliament and a government rather than a
municipality.

Sooner or later all the big public questions affecting
London are considered and thrashed out here. Not
only are the powers and duties of the Council enor-
mous, but Government legislative proposals, State
administration affecting local government, and a num-
ber of aspects of the work of other authorities in London
have to be considered and conclusions reached about
them by the London County Council. And from this
building are controlled many other L.C.C. offices,
buildings, institutions and schools, not only in the
County of London, but throughout the Home Counties
and as far away as Brighton. For there are the numer-
ous cottage and tenement estates; the main drainage
pumping stations and works; the 61 fire stations; more
than 1,500 primary, secondary, trade, art and other
London County Council schools and colleges; the 45
residential and hospital schools; the 50 welfare homes,
hostels and nurseries; the 21 local offices of the Educa-
tion Officer's Department; the 142 welfare centres;
the 72 school treatment centres; the 22 ambulance
stations; the 120 restaurants, and so on. This is the
nerve centre of them all, probably the greatest single
unit of executive administration to be found anywhere.
Indeed, in *direct executive civil administration*, I incline
to the view that County Hall has as big a job as the
British Government itself.

To the County Hall come deputations from educa-
tional institutions (including London University) not
under the direct control of the Council on points of

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mutual interest, or to seek a grant from the Council towards development or improvement. Representatives of Metropolitan Borough Councils come to interview chairmen of committees or chief officers on matters connected with legislation, or Council sanction for Borough Council loans, or with regard to matters of joint interest such as housing, town planning or public health.

Parliament has conferred so many additional powers and duties on the Council, and the development of services demanded by public opinion has been so considerable, that even the huge County Hall, by the time it was opened in 1922, was already inadequate to hold the entire central administrative staff. This situation was accentuated by the transfer to the Council under the Local Government Act, 1929, of the duties of the Metropolitan Asylums Board and the twenty-five Metropolitan Boards of Guardians, particularly in connection with hospitals and public assistance. This meant a considerable enlargement of the central administrative staff, which came to include some proportion of the staffs taken over from the former authorities.

When the Labour Party won its majority in 1934, staff development was essential in order that it might carry out its pledges on housing and slum clearance, but even under the old Council a number of the central administrative departments were housed outside the County Hall at considerable expense; this factor of expense, coupled with the even more important consideration of administrative convenience, caused both parties on the new Council to agree to the erection of an extension of the County Hall on the other side of Belvedere Road. The extension was

COUNTY HALL: HEART OF LONDON GOVERNMENT completed in 1933, Sir Giles Gilbert Scott being the consulting architect. This, together with the powers of the Council to acquire the land on the South bank of the river bounded by Westminster Bridge, Waterloo Bridge and York Road, is the beginning of a bold re-development of the South side. (See Chapter 9.)

§ *County Hall and Guildhall*

The atmosphere of County Hall is essentially a live one. The work of members of the Council—particularly of the leaders and chairmen of committees—is very heavy, and it is all unpaid, but members can now claim out-of-pocket expenses under the Local Government Act, 1948. Consequently there is and will be very little entertainment. Even the powers which the Council obtained in 1948 limit the cost of hospitality and courtesies to a yearly sum of £6,000.

Life at the Mansion House and the Guildhall is very different. The civic authorities of the City of London are famous for their generous and extensive hospitality in which members of the Corporation are expected to play their part. County Hall, on the other hand, is a highly organised workshop of public administration. On the efficiency of its operations depends the well-being of millions of men, women and children. A workshop it must remain.

How the London County Council Does Its Work

THERE are three main groupings in the official work of the London County Council—the Council, the committees, the staff. Equally important, however, at any rate in regard to policy, is the work and organisation of the political parties—the majority or government, and the opposition. Indeed, it is impossible to understand the Council and its work without an understanding of the political parties and their work. The members of the Council owe a great deal to the courtesy and efficiency of the staff (for staff details see Chapter 7) but, although it may be surprising to the outsider, the smoothness of the work of the staff is to a great extent dependent on the good organisation, efficiency and clear-headedness of the political parties on the Council.

§ *The Chairman of the Council—The Dais*

The Council meetings are presided over by the Right Honourable the Chairman of the London County Council, supported by the Vice-Chairman and the Deputy-Chairman. The Chairman of the Council has many other important duties, inside and outside County Hall. These three, who stand ceremonially and in public status at the head of the Council, sit on the dais; indeed their collective title is “The Dais”. The Chairman of the Council is elected yearly on the nomination of the majority party, generally from within but sometimes from without the Council. Lord Snell was an example of the latter, and held office for the

HOW THE LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL DOES ITS WORK
four years 1934-8. He was the first member of the Labour Party to hold the high office of Chairman of the Council. The Vice-Chairman, who is the first assistant of the Chairman, is also nominated by the majority. He often takes the Chair during the proceedings of the Council and frequently represents the Council at outside functions. The Deputy-Chairman of the Council is nominated by the opposition, so that even in the collective deliberations of the Dais the minority is represented; and from time to time the Deputy-Chairman takes the Chair of the Council on behalf of the Chairman, and often represents the Council at outside functions.

The Chairman of the Council during his year of office is removed from the party atmosphere. He takes no part in general politics; he does not speak in the Council except on ceremonial occasions or on matters of procedure; he does not attend the party meetings. Indeed he is so carefully kept away from party affairs that, were it not for his own heavy duties, his work in connection with ceremonial functions, and his contact with other authorities, he would lead a somewhat lonely life. He holds a great public office, held in high esteem, not only by the members of the Council, but at Whitehall and among all local authorities who are familiar with the work of the Council. His position is analogous in the Council to that of the Speaker in the House of Commons. The high traditions of the Chairmen of the London County Council, together with the fact that the standing orders make it a duty of the Clerk of the Council to advise the Chairman of the Council and chairmen of committees on matters of procedure has, with rare exceptions, kept the Chair out of disputes with the "floor"; and

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although the Vice-Chairman and the Deputy-Chairman have rather more freedom to concern themselves with political matters, they, in the chamber itself, act in accordance with the best traditions of the impartial chairmanship of the Council.

§ Law and Standing Orders

The existence of the Council and all its powers and duties are dependent upon Acts of Parliament. As is the case with all British local authorities, with certain limited exceptions, the Council can only spend moneys and do such things as are specifically authorised by Acts of Parliament or orders made thereunder with the exception that for strictly limited purposes it can incur, with the sanction of the Minister of Health under section 228 (1) of the Local Government Act, 1933, individual items of expenditure which would not otherwise be lawful. If the Council went outside statutory or ministerial authority, the District Auditor, before whom any local government elector may appear, would surcharge the members of the Council who had authorised the expenditure. Any person aggrieved could appeal to the High Court or to the Minister of Health.

The procedure of the Council and its committees and the powers delegated by the Council to its committees are determined by the standing orders of the Council, of which there are 323 at the time of writing, and the orders of reference to the several committees. These standing orders, which incidentally incorporate the relevant statutory directions are, in my view, a model of their kind. In addition to the standing orders, there are three volumes of regulations numbering about 1,000 in all, and each committee of the Council has a booklet of committee rules. The purpose of these

HOW THE LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL DOES ITS WORK

standing orders, regulations and rules is not only to govern procedure for the Chairman of the Council and chairmen of committees, but to settle, unless and until otherwise determined, matters which frequently arise and which it is practicable so to determine, in order to avoid a whole series of similar issues having to be freshly considered on numerous occasions. Thus the time of officers and members is saved and decisions are expedited.

§ *Delegation to Committees—Rights of the Minority*

In view of the vast operations of the Council, it is necessary, in order to prevent the Council agenda itself being “choked”, for the power to act in certain matters to be delegated to committees and, in turn, committees are authorised (subject to the approval of the Council) to delegate part of their work to sub-committees and, in various relatively small or routine matters, power to act is given to chief officers. All questions involving finance or what are defined as questions of principle, including policy, are carefully reserved to the Council itself. Matters delegated to committees do not involve substantial questions of policy. Even so there are two provisions which safeguard the principle of democratic control: one is that a minority of not less than one-fourth of the committee members present, or any ten members of the Council, may require a decision of a committee to be reported to the Council forthwith for any directions before action is taken; the other is that committees must report to the Council periodically all material actions taken by them, when on any item further information can be asked for, regret expressed, or directions given for the future.

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The matters delegated by committees to sub-committees are less important in character and appropriate safeguards are imposed. Matters delegated to chief officers are relatively small or routine in character; in any case chief officers act in accordance with the known policy of the Council and its committees; for their own protection, quite apart from the rights of the Council, chief officers are very careful to submit to a committee or sub-committee of the Council any doubtful point, even if it is strictly within their own delegated powers.

These principles, together with the careful reservation to the Council through its Finance Committee of all matters of financial importance, run right through the standing orders. The rights of the members of the Council are further safeguarded by the fact that they may place on the Council agenda for debate, notices of motion affecting any branch of the Council's administration or the interests of the people of London with which it is proper for the Council to concern itself. It is true that the majority, by adjourning the Council before the motion is reached, can prevent it coming on, and this has been done in past years; but a majority doing this against a legitimate motion on a matter of immediate public importance is likely to make itself unpopular. Unless the notices of motion are frivolous, vexatious or obstructive, reasonable facilities are usually given for debate.

Another form of notice of motion is provided for in the standing orders which, I think, is somewhat unique in local government procedure. It is a motion in which no opinion is expressed, but refers a matter to the appropriate committee or committees for consideration and report; it is formally moved and

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seconded and, without debate, adopted; in due course the committee or committees concerned must submit a report on the matter to the Council which, of course, can be debated and challenged. Many valuable reports are included in the minutes of the Council as a result of this standing order, even if as regards some of them no action has resulted. I remember, while my party was in opposition, securing by this means two most interesting reports on "A Zoo for South London" and "A municipal theatre".

Moreover, at each of the public meetings of the Council an opportunity to ventilate points about current administration is provided by putting questions to the Leader of the Council and to chairmen of committees. Where the view is taken by the questioner that the answer is sufficiently unsatisfactory to warrant such a course, he can move the adjournment of the Council and after a five-minutes' speech, a formal seconding and a five-minutes' reply, ten members can call a division.

One other important feature of the standing orders should be referred to. The work of the London County Council can never stand still. Whether the Council is sitting or is in recess, matters are bound to arise for urgent decision. Consequently it is provided that the Chairman of the Council (or Vice-Chairman or Deputy-Chairman of the Council) can give decisions urgently required during recesses in the name of the Council on the recommendation of a committee, or the chairman, vice-chairman or other authorised member acting on behalf of the committee concerned. Chairmen and vice-chairmen of committees are empowered to deal with minor matters arising between committee meetings. Little, if any, advantage has ever

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been taken of these powers to "slip through" decisions which would be troublesome in committee or the Council; and, in the main, these decisions do not involve any controversial issue of principle or policy. Indeed, where the matter is of substance it is usual for the Leader of the Opposition, or his appropriate representative, to be informed, when practicable, before action is taken.

Moreover, it is not only within the power of the Chairman of the Council to call a meeting of the Council whenever required, but a requisition signed by twenty members compels a meeting to be called within seven days.

It will be seen, therefore, that the standing orders take account of the need for urgent action upon occasion, whilst at the same time giving individual members of the Council and the opposition every reasonable facility for challenging the actions and the policy of the majority.

The large number of standing orders, regulations and committee rules may sound very frightening. Only the Clerk of the Council and his assistants have got them all in their heads. I certainly could not successfully go through a cross-examination about them in detail but, as in the case of Parliamentary procedure, I have found that when I have read them (and it is desirable to read them more than once) and got the general theory and hang of them, I have been able to work under them subject to a check-up with the Clerk of the Council on specific points. It is as well never to scorn wisely-framed standing orders, regulations and committee rules; they are among the greatest time-savers and promoters of orderly procedure in public administration.

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§ *The Council*

The supreme body of London County Council administration is the Council, consisting of 150 members, i.e., three members elected for each of the forty-three divisions, and twenty-one aldermen. It meets every other Tuesday at 2.30 p.m., except during the Easter, Whitsun, Summer and Christmas recesses. These recesses account for over a third of the year. The new member of the Council—particularly if he belongs to the Labour Party—tends to think these recesses are too long, from the point of view of democratic control. But before he has been at County Hall long, particularly if he takes his full share of the work, he is thankful for recesses which enable him to give more attention to his work or business outside the Council; and he needs some rest from Council work. Moreover, the recesses enable the chairmen of committees and the chief officers to catch up with arrears and to prepare for future work. Recesses do not necessarily involve loss of time; on the contrary they may well save time; for actual results are not achieved by talking in committees, and ordinary routine business goes on uninterrupted. Before committees register their decisions or recommendations, reports must be prepared for them, and afterwards, the work must be done. The idea that talk and deliberation is the only thing that matters is an idea that is soon lost when one is faced with the responsibility of action.

The Council meets in public. Its agenda, summarised, is as follows:

Minutes of the last meeting of the Council.

Special announcements (if any) by the Chairman of the Council.

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Petitions (if any) presented by members of the Council.
Report by Deputy-Chairman of the Council as to documents sealed.

Questions.

Reports of Committees.

Notices of Motion (if any).

Paragraphs of committee reports which contain a recommendation can be challenged by a motion to refer the recommendation back to the committee with or without an instruction, or a specific amendment can be moved to the recommendation, or an instruction to the committee can be moved to report further on some particular aspect of the matter. Paragraphs which contain no recommendation can be voted against. Members cannot speak for more than fifteen minutes without the consent of the Council. When the fifteen minutes are up the Clerk hands to the Chairman of the Council a little slip on which is printed, "The hon. member has been speaking for fifteen minutes", and the Council is informed by the Chairman accordingly. I am told that a member of the Council once got hold of a few of these slips, took them home, and on occasions when he thought his wife had been sufficiently eloquent, presented her with one of them! The meetings of the Council last from a few minutes to many hours, according to the nature of the business and the temper of the members. The longest meeting that I was in was in 1928 when the Labour Party (then a minority) was fighting the Traffic Co-ordination Bills of the Council and the London Traffic Combine; that sitting lasted from 2.30 p.m. one day until 11 a.m. the next day, and I think that a large proportion of the members enjoyed every minute of it.

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Women members play a full and competent part in the work of the Council, including chairmanship of committees. Two women members (Mrs. E. M. Lowe, and Lady Nathan) have held the Chairmanship of the Council.

How London County Council Committees Do Their Work

IN the main, the public meetings of the Council are naturally debating assemblies, discussing and voting upon broad issues of policy. The hard work of detail is done in committee meetings which the Press and public do not attend. There is, however, one exception to this rule of privacy at committee meetings, namely, the Education Committee.¹ The reason for this exception is that it is a committee of particular public importance and took over from the former School Board for London the functions of a body which had met in public. The consequence is that the full meetings of the committee resemble in procedure and atmosphere the meetings of the Council itself, most of the work of detail being done in sub-committees which, in a number of cases, are as important as full committees of the Council. The work of some sub-committees is even further divided by referring certain matters to sections of sub-committees.

§ The Committees of the Council—Co-option

The standing committees of the Council are:

Children's	Fire Brigade
Education.	General Purposes.
Establishment.	Health.
Finance.	Housing.

¹ The licensing sessions of the Public Control Committee are held in public.

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Parks.	Supplies.
Parliamentary.	Town Planning.
Public Control.	Welfare.
Restaurants and Catering	

The names of the committees indicate the nature of their duties. The committees usually meet once a fortnight.

The Council has power under the London County Council (General Powers) Act, 1934, which followed an example set for the country as a whole outside London under the Local Government Act, 1933, to add co-opted members to all its committees, except the Finance Committee.

The device of co-option is often objected to on the ground that it is undemocratic and unrepresentative. Although the number of co-opted persons should be limited so as to preserve the supremacy of elected representatives, I regard co-option as a useful expedient. It enables local authorities to bring into the service of appropriate committees persons of particular capacity or special experience in connection with the services concerned, whose abilities would not otherwise be at the disposal of the Council. Moreover, they relieve the elected members in the discharge of their heavy public duties, and they provide training for possible future members of the Council. It is important, however, that co-opted persons should be so selected as to add to the quality of the committee concerned. Co-option should not be regarded purely as a means of adding to the strength of the parties or merely of conferring an honour.

In the case of some committees, provision is made for the appointment of a considerable number of sub-committees meeting at institutions or offices

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belonging to the Council outside the County Hall, having duties which relate to particular homes or schools or areas.

§ *At the Committee Meetings—Officers' Reports*

Committees play a vital part in the work of the Council. The committee meetings of political parties outside public administration possess by no means a universal reputation for their promptitude in commencing business. One of the first things that the new Councillor learns—sometimes to his surprise—is that municipal committees usually begin their proceedings at the time notified. Provided a quorum is present, as is usually the case, it is the practice of County Hall committees to begin “on the stroke”, whichever side happens to be in a majority. Members of the Council are busy people and they quite properly object to their time being wasted by lateness in beginning, inefficiency on the part of a chairman, or needless and superfluous talk on the part of members, except on occasion in the case of the committee which meets in public where a fair amount of discussion is expected, at any rate on certain subjects. I am not saying that it is wrong, but the presence of the Press is always conducive to eloquence.

The number of items on a committee agenda paper will vary according to the nature of the committee, although the number of items is not necessarily an indication of the length of the proceedings because the items themselves vary in importance. The largest number of items on the General Purposes Committee agenda at any one meeting during 1948 was 39, and the Town Planning Committee 40; and as an indication of the importance of some sub-committees I may state

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that the highest number of items for an Education Sub-Committee was 52, a fair number of which would be of considerable importance.

An item on the agenda may in itself be a sufficient explanation of the nature of that piece of business, but all the important items, if they do not merely consist of, are supplemented by, reports from the chief officer or chief officers concerned. The length of these reports will vary from half a page to twenty or even more foolscap-folio pages of closely typed matter, and I venture to say that, apart from the Council agenda itself which is very well done, the reports of chief officers to committees are perhaps the most valuable element in the administrative system of the Council. These reports are always honest, objective attempts to put the committees in possession of all the relevant matters before them. The more important reports usually give the history of the matter, then the facts as they stand at that time, then the advantages and disadvantages of alternative courses that might be pursued by the committee, and possibly a concluding indication of the course which the chief officer thinks would be the wisest to adopt. I have said "possibly" because chief officers of the London County Council have been trained not to concern themselves with questions of party political policy. Where party political policy is involved, the report will state that the matter is one of policy for determination by the committee. Where no particular point of policy is involved the chief officer may make a direct recommendation. Where the question may verge on the realm of policy though not of party political policy, the chief officer may go so far as to state that "having regard to all the circumstances the committee may decide to . . ."

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Generally, these reports of chief officers are splendid productions. They have the effect of encouraging committees to act in accordance with the facts and to form sound conclusions irrespective of preconceived theories. If the facts are inconvenient either to the majority or to the minority, the chief officer cannot help it. His business is to place all the facts and relative considerations before the committee.

It is, of course, desirable that long reports should not be over-done, for there is a limit to the reading capacity even of London County Councillors, but the practice of some local authorities in having verbal and not written reports of chief officers before committees is, I think, wrong. The value of a written report is that it prevents a chief officer afterwards arguing as to what he told the committee: his report is on record. And, what is equally important, it prevents members of committees disputing what the chief officer reported: they are tied up as well. There is thus a check on both officers and members, apart from the consideration that it is right that members of committees should be fully informed beforehand of all important matters with which they are called upon to deal.

No member of a committee of the Council can properly discharge his duties unless he reads these reports; indeed I always advised my colleagues on the Council that it was their duty to read, at any rate during the first year, every line of written or printed matter that is circulated to them. In time they will get to know the items of minor importance on the Council agenda which it is not necessary always to read in detail, although it would be a good fault if they did. It is always best to be on the safe side, for unless members read and understand their papers they

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are not fit to discharge their duties. In any case, when the committee meets they are assumed to have read the circulated agenda paper and reports. The time-wasting practice obtaining in some organisations of reading reports, although they have been circulated, either because somebody has not read them or to refresh the minds of members, would not be tolerated at County Hall. There is no time for wasteful repetition of this character. The member who has not read his committee papers must either keep his mouth shut or open it at the risk of making a fool of himself. If the member is to be effective, he must read, mark, learn and inwardly digest. If he cannot, he should not have had the presumption to stand for election to the Council.

§ Chairmen of Committees

The Chairman of a London County Council committee is encouraged to be reasonably speedy in procedure. He calls the number of the item and in a word or a short sentence will indicate what he thinks should be done—and on he goes until a point is raised. There is no need for him to ask the committee if it is agreed as a formal question, because every member knows that it is up to him to raise objections or questions, and he is assured that if he does his point will be considered and dealt with. The annoying practice of some chairmen of asking for a resolution and for a seconder, hearing discussion, and then asking if there is an amendment or any more discussion, and then asking if the committee is agreed, or if it wishes to vote, all of it in a leisurely way, is not and could not be tolerated at County Hall. Members quickly learn that, unless they are prompt in attending a committee,

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quite a number of items of business will have been settled; the consequence of that is that a real effort is made to be prompt in attendance. The business of committees is so considerable that in most cases the agenda is divided into part I and part II. Part I contains all the important matters; part II contains the more formal and routine business, briefly set out with an indication of what the chairman suggests should be done, and except for one or two matters usually agreed to without difficulty.

I do not wish it to be thought for one moment that the business of London County Council committees is rushed through at breakneck speed without proper consideration. Members are jealous of their rights, but generally speaking all of them, irrespective of party, have a keen desire for businesslike conduct and a strong objection to waste of time. The result is that important matters receive adequate consideration and time is not wasted on unimportant questions. Always an item is provided at the end of the agenda covering urgent matters arising since the preparation of the agenda paper or uncontentious business. When the consideration of the agenda is completed the chairman says, "That concludes the business of the committee", and the members disperse.

In committee discussions it does not follow that the members of one political party all agree with each other. Indeed, outside the recognised field of party controversy, many differences of opinion within the same party quite naturally arise. Where the Council is acting in a quasi-judicial 'capacity—e.g. licensing functions—"the whips are off" and members use their own judgment on the evidence before them. On committee matters where real questions of party policy

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arise, however, considerable argument may ensue and a vote be taken. Sometimes it may be understood that the opposition does not agree with the policy proposed to be pursued by the majority and that, in order to economise time, the fight is reserved for the Council Chamber itself. On occasion the opposition may make such a case for its point of view that the majority is impressed; in that case the wise chairman will suggest that the matter be adjourned until the next meeting; in the meantime, the majority may adhere to or alter its view, or an alternative or compromise may be arranged.

Generally speaking, committee discussions are conducted in a good temper, the most vigorous debates probably taking place upon occasion at the General Purposes Committee, which has been described—with but small accuracy—as the Cabinet of the Council.

In the case of the London County Council, all committee chairmen and vice-chairmen are drawn from the majority party. In view of the extent of the work and the great responsibilities of the Council, it has a somewhat different character from other local authorities. The chairmen and vice-chairmen of committees, hold positions of heavy responsibility. They are expected by the Leader of the Council to lead their committees in accordance with party policy where matters of party policy arise and to ensure the regular and prompt attendance of the members of their party on committees. The opposition has its leading member and sometimes a whip on committees. The wise chairman will freely consult his “opposite number” on the other side, on matters that are appropriate for joint discussion: this often has the effect of avoiding misunderstandings and facilitating business. Indeed

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there are some matters over which it would be contrary to the public interest for the parties to fight; in such cases it is customary for consultation between party leaders to take place. On a question of much importance, namely, the appointment of chief officers of the Council, it is fortunate that there have rarely occurred divisions on party lines, everybody being anxious to get the best and most appropriate person available for the post.

Chairmen of committees, particularly the important ones, carry a heavy responsibility. Small matters constantly come before them for decision and subsequent report to committee. Naturally, there is a good deal of consultation between them and the appropriate chief officers as to the business of the Council, and the chairmen, as part of the business of carrying their political friends with them, must discuss important matters with their colleagues on the committee, with the Leader of the Council, with a committee of their party or with the full party meeting. In important matters all these things have to be done. Moreover, the chairman of a committee must necessarily read more papers than ordinary members and responsibility itself is a form of labour.

As to whether or not a chairman's work will be too much for him, depends largely on his competence, his capacity to settle his worries in an orderly fashion, and his ability to carry responsibility with a cheerful heart. He is helped a great deal in his work by that valuable officer, the committee clerk who is drawn from the Clerk of the Council's department. The committee clerk is not only a person who keeps minutes and records, he is an administrative officer, responsible under his chief officer for seeing that the decisions of

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the committees are translated into action or the necessary instructions given to the departments affected. He must know the standing orders. He is the eyes and ears in committee of the Clerk of the Council, who obviously cannot attend all committees. The committee clerks are the backbone of committee administration, and it is vitally important that they should be quick, competent and businesslike. Except for reading the shorter reports which have not been circulated or explaining questions of fact, these keen men do not intervene in committee discussions, although they can be seen at times dropping a useful, but respectful, word into the ear of the chairman.

Chief Officers of the Council

No picture of how the London County Council does its work is complete without the reader being introduced to the fifteen chief officers of the Council, who are:

The Clerk of the Council (the principal administrative officer of the Council);
 Comptroller of the Council (chief financial officer);
 Chief Engineer and County Surveyor;
 Architect to the Council and Superintending Architect of Metropolitan Buildings;
 Solicitor and Parliamentary Officer;
 Chief Officer of the London Fire Brigade;
 Medical Officer of Health and School Medical Officer;
 Director of Housing and Valuer;
 Chief Officer of the Public Control Department;
 Chief Officer of the Parks Department;
 Education Officer;
 Chief Officer of Supplies;
 Chief Officer of Welfare Department.
 Chief Officer of the Restaurants and Catering Department.
 Children's Officer.

Their designations indicate the nature of their duties.

The Council's central administrative staff numbers about 8,300. There are also about 17,500 teachers, a uniformed staff of about 2,500 in the Fire Brigade, 5,700 in the health service, 2,400 in the welfare service, 1,500 in the parks service, 6,000 in the housing estates service, 1,000 in the main drainage service,

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and 5,000 in the restaurants and catering service. The total staff of officers and employees is about 60,000.

Under the directions of the Council, the chief officers are held responsible for the good conduct and efficiency of the executive and administrative work of their departments. Their salaries range from £2,000 to £3,750 a year. The extent to which their work is related to the duties of particular committees varies according to the nature of their office and the terms of reference to the various committees of the Council. But they are all chief officers of the whole Council; they are equally at the service of all the committees of the Council as and when required; and it is their duty to keep in mind the interests of the Council as a whole, rather than those of particular committees. They attend committee meetings personally, or are represented by subordinate officers according to the nature and importance of the business. They are freely accessible to all members of the Council irrespective of party for the purpose of giving information, but it is no part of their business to supply "briefs" for politicians. There is a very good tradition that an officer must not speak unnecessarily in committee, his contribution to discussions usually being in the form of making a report, answering questions, or making explanations to a committee when the facts are not properly understood. In particular he must be careful, so far as possible, to keep out of disputes between the political parties and not mix politics with business.

All of this will read strangely to those who have been under the impression that the London County Council is "run by its officials" and who have assumed that a big authority inevitably tends to be "run by its officers". I have served on many public authorities

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and I have been a Minister of the Crown; and I say that, as a whole, the officers of the London County Council are the least domineering of them all. The talk about the "officials running away with the show" is nearly always exaggerated, particularly by people who have some disagreement with a decision that has been reached and who, unable to conceive that they may be wrong, must place the responsibility for "error" somewhere. Far from settling things behind the backs of the Council, officers—in their own interests—are meticulously careful to place responsibility for decisions on to members of the Council. This is not to say that the officers of the London County Council are mere automata, mere cogs in a machine, who do their work blindly. They have the responsibility of organising great departments and a mass of executive administration, and they carry considerable influence with committees of the Council in the realm where officers should carry influence, namely, that of fact, soundness of administration, and the best method of putting into practice the policy of the Council.

I have referred to the able reports of chief officers to committees to which importance is always attached. The sphere of the officers in the work of the London County Council is a large one; the status of the chief officers is high; but the public would be unfair to the chief officers and much too lenient with the councillors if it did not place responsibility for policy upon the councillors and not the officers.

Party Politics at County Hall

I HAVE left to this stage in the survey of the London County Council the important place of the political parties and the party system in the work of the Council.

The Liberals or Progressives ruled the Council from 1889 to 1907, and did fine work for London; their numbers in the Council steadily declined after the first world war. The Moderates (or Municipal Reformers) were in power from 1907 to 1934. The Liberals were eliminated at the election of March, 1934, when Labour won its first majority, having sixty-nine councillors to the Conservatives' fifty-five. In addition to the Councillors there were twenty Aldermen appointed for six years, making a total membership of the Council of 144. There is a long tradition that, in other than exceptional circumstances, the Aldermen appointed by the Council each three years shall be divided between the parties with a view to making the *total* balance of Aldermen between the parties correspond to the balance between the elected Councillors. From this general rule the Liberals had departed in 1895 and the Conservatives in 1910. The total state of the parties on the Council after the 1934 election was Labour, eighty; Conservative, sixty-four. Labour majority, sixteen. At the 1937 election, Labour increased its majority to thirty. The war intervening, the next election did not take place until 1946, when Labour was again returned, the majority being sixty-four. Between 1946 and 1949 there was a radical redistribution of seats, the number of constituencies

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being reduced to forty-three, but each returning three members, making 129, plus twenty-one Aldermen. The electorate consisted of about two-and-a-quarter million men and women. In 1949, Labour secured sixty-four seats, the Conservatives sixty-four, and there was one Liberal. This was an exceptional and difficult state of affairs. There were, however, ten continuing Labour Aldermen, and for the eleven remaining Aldermanic vacancies, the Council chose six Labour and five Conservatives. Thus the deadlock was solved by Labour having the small majority of ten in a Council of 150.

The practice of the London County Council is to elect Aldermen from outside the Council, whether they have stood for election to the Council or not. My own view is that Aldermen should be regarded as a means of strengthening the Council, particularly on subjects where the Council as a whole or the party making the nomination might otherwise be weak. Aldermen should add to the quality and capacity of the Council and have adequate time for the responsibilities involved. Looked at from this angle, it is a matter of indifference whether or not they are defeated candidates.

§ *The Party System*

There is no secret about the party system at County Hall. It is agreed between the parties that the majority provides the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of committees, although the Deputy-Chairman of the Council is, as I have explained, always drawn from the opposition; indeed, the Labour Party when in opposition would not permit its members to accept committee chairs. In London conditions I think this practice is wise. It results in a more coherent administration, and

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it prevents the vigour of the opposition being sapped by some of its members being given "honours" by the majority. Moreover, the position of a chairman of a committee who has no majority behind him is anomalous in the committee, and is difficult when the case arises of his being called upon to defend a report in the Council which is being attacked by his own political friends. The same position of a majority taking the chairs and vice-chairs obtains on the Metropolitan Borough Councils, although not on some of the mixed *ad hoc* authorities where the party system is somewhat in the background, if indeed it obtains at all. The general London practice, however, of the majority taking the posts of responsibility does not obtain, generally speaking, outside London, where it is quite common for the mayoralty and the chairmanships of committees to be held in turn by members of different parties, or to be shared by the parties on the Council.

The leader of the majority party on the London County Council is recognised in the Council's standing orders, and designated the Leader of the Council, it being provided that questions may be addressed to him at Council meetings as well as to chairmen of committees. For many years he has been nicknamed by the Press, "Prime Minister of London". Normally, he does not accept committee chairmanships.

The leader of the minority party is also recognised in the standing orders, being designated the Leader of the Opposition. Although not recognised in the standing orders, everybody knows of the existence of the Chief Majority Whip, the Chief Opposition Whip and their junior whips; indeed, the two whips' rooms provided for their use in the County Hall have "Whips' Room" painted on the doors, just as the rooms of the Leader

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of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition are appropriately indicated. All the chairmen of committees also have a room or part of a room for their use, as is the case with Ministers in the House of Commons.

When divisions are challenged in the Council by ten members rising in their seats and demanding a division, it is usually two of the whips of either side who are nominated by the Chairman of the Council as tellers. Members are expected by their parties not to leave the Council meeting unless they have the permission of or have consulted with the appropriate whip, for it is the duty of the whips to keep the attendance as high as possible throughout the sitting. Sometimes "pairs" are arranged, as in Parliament. Even in the committees of the Council there are members who function as whips for their parties, for committee attendances are of great importance, particularly for the majority.

§ *Work of the Party Leaders*

Within their spheres the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition carry heavy responsibilities; they are naturally greatest in the case of the Leader of the Council. They have to be kept advised by their friends of important matters which are coming up or have arisen in committee, and give advice as to the line that should be taken; they have to consider whether or not a party decision should be taken on a given matter of policy; it may be important for this to be done even while the matter is still in committee in order to prevent the situation being prejudiced later in the Council. But chairmen of committees are not, and should not, be regarded as the irresponsible instrument of the Leader of the Council: if wise, he will

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give them their head on most matters. The party leaders must shoulder the responsibility of leading and advising their political friends on important matters of party policy and party tactics. If they make many mistakes, their authority and possibly their future in the party is damaged.

In the organisation and work of a political party on the London County Council much depends on the Leader and the Chief Whip, not only in respect of their grasp of the work of the Council and their ability to come to sound conclusions on matters of public policy, but on their capacity for organisation within the party itself. A good leader may be able to make eloquent speeches, but if his team is not organised for victorious battle his own speeches will not necessarily carry the team to victory. The effective use of the rank and file is part of the art of good leadership. I have found that the responsibilities of a Leader of the Council who takes his job seriously are as heavy as those of a Cabinet Minister with a busy department, although the salary of the Leader of the Council is nothing and that of a Cabinet Minister is £5,000 a year.

The chairmen of committees must stand on their own feet and take the responsibility of coming to their own conclusions on all matters free from complexity and unlikely to lead to controversy within the party or among the public; a heavy burden of work is carried through the committees by their chairmen in this way. But in all matters of importance or where difficulties arise, they must bring their troubles to the Leader of the Council; indeed, the success of the chairman of a committee, from the point of view of the Leader of the Council, is largely determined by his capacity to

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bring to the Leader of the Council the things he should bring and not to bother him about matters with which he need not be concerned. The Leader of the Council, therefore, has frequent consultations with chairmen of committees, sometimes with three or four at a time where inter-committee matters are involved. Naturally he is often consulted by chief officers of the Council, even though in most matters of administration their problems are taken to the chairmen of committees. Moreover, the Leader of the Council, with the Chief Whip, has his Party to look after, the party meetings to preside over; he has to do his best to see that the party is kept in good spirits, and if he finds unrest existing here or there in the party, to ascertain whether it is justified, and if so to remedy the defect.

§ How Party Decisions Are Made

In addition to the party meeting, the Labour Party on the Council has a Policy Committee consisting of the Labour members of the General Purposes Committee of the Council, which includes nearly all the chairmen of committees.¹ Much hard work is done at the Policy Committee, the work for which must be prepared by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Whip. The Policy Committee of the Labour majority on the Council is not a cabinet, and I have never encouraged it so to regard itself, but its work has in some respects a resemblance to the cabinet system. Through the Leader of the Council, the chairmen of committees come to the Policy Committee with their problems, and according to their nature and

¹ Although it was issued for the guidance of Metropolitan Borough Council Labour Parties, see the memorandum of the London Labour Party in Appendix I, which deals with municipal party organisation and other matters.

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importance recommendations may be taken to the full party meeting for determination. Suggestions or motions made in the full party meeting are, if they are not settled at once, often referred to the Policy Committee for consideration. In settling the big issues of policy which face a great authority like the London County Council, it would be fatal for important complex issues to be determined on the spot by the full party meeting of eighty or ninety members, apart from the fact that owing to the magnitude of the Council's operations the work of the majority on the Council inevitably bears some resemblance to that of a government and a parliamentary party as well as to that of a majority on a local authority. On the other hand, just because the democratic character of the Labour Party must make the full party meeting supreme, it is necessary that the channels for the consideration of policy shall not only be democratic, but shall also be effective and responsible.

I have often been asked whether this "party business" on the London County Council is not wrong and whether it is appropriate in the case of a local authority. The party system is capable of abuse, but I answered when in opposition and in power, and I answer now, that I believe the party system on the London County Council to be right, and not only right but in the public interest. Out of the clash of opinion and principle between political parties, lessons should be learned, policies open to modification and substantial truth emerge.

I do not know what troubles are ahead, but while I was on the Council I saw that over a wide field both parties have been willing to consider many questions on the facts and the merits, irrespective of party views,

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chiefly because in much of the Council's work, party considerations do not arise. There is, however, a generally recognised field of principle or policy on which the two elements of opinion in the Council are divided. As a whole, it is convenient rather than otherwise that this divergence of view should be organised and should find corporate and vigorous expression.

Moreover, it is good for any majority to be conscious of the fact that an organised opposition is watching it, ready to pounce upon it if it makes mistakes or is guilty of wrong-doing or maladministration. An organised opposition is in the public interest. I would far sooner lead a majority with an active and able opposition looking for faults, than I would lead a Council on which only one party existed. The meetings of such a Council are bound to be lacking in interest, and it must be difficult for the members of a one-party Council without an opposition to refrain from petty quarrelling among themselves. As long as both parties are led with a sense of responsibility and public spirit, there need not be needless quibbling about small matters, nor ill-advised controversy about big matters where questions of party principle do not arise. It can be said with truth, I think, that in recent years, including the present Council, a sensible discrimination between matters that are legitimate subjects for party disputes and those which are not has, generally speaking, obtained. This has been to the credit of all parties on the Council. I doubt whether the fine reputation of the London County Council for uprightness and purity of administration would be maintained if the party system on the Council were eliminated.

PARTY POLITICS AT COUNTY HALL

§ *Quality of Councillors*

Perhaps this is a convenient point to refer to the qualification needed for membership of local authorities. I doubt if it is practicable, but I should like to see some sort of examination for at least a proportion of candidates for public office. There really ought to be some guarantee that people have taken local government seriously before standing for election and that they have a reasonable capacity and willingness to read and understand the documents upon which the work of municipalities must be based. I do not seek University or even secondary school educational qualifications, for I have seen some highly educated people less effective in public administration than people of much more humble education. We have now, however, enjoyed several generations of elementary education, and there is a case to be argued for a reasonable qualifying test, particularly if members were paid for their services.

In all parties are to be found persons holding public office who are not really competent to shoulder the responsibilities entailed. This is not peculiar to democracy, for dictatorships may well be worse. A candidate may be selected because he is "a good sort", because of long service to his party, or because he is the best person who can be found in the locality in cases where the local political organisation has unwisely insisted on a local residence qualification. Some are anxious to hold public office to gratify a desire for the apparent sense of power or status, although in the long run capacity alone brings real power; some desire to enjoy the amenities of public buildings; and some merely want to have letters after their name or a distinctive

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designation in front of it. Such people are of little use in Parliament or on local authorities: I say that irrespective of the party to which they belong. It may be that examinations and prescribed qualifications would be illusory and would not provide a solution. The best solution would be the exercise of far greater care and a higher sense of public responsibility on the part of the local political associations which select candidates. That there is a problem I am sure.

The extent of the evil should not be exaggerated, however, for British public life continues to throw up a large number of men and women of ability and conscientious public spirit. And although I have contemplated the payment of councillors, I can neither ignore its dangers nor forget the contribution that voluntary public service has made to the evolution of a high public spirit in our local affairs. After all, the British have perhaps manifested more capacity in the art of self-government than the people of any other great nation in the world. The last thing I would wish to do is to make wholesale reflections upon British public life. All I say is that there is a certain problem and that it should be recognised and, so far as possible, tackled. If the imperfections I have indicated were to become widespread, democracy would be in danger. It is the duty of democracy to be conscious of its responsibilities as well as its rights.

What the London County Council Does for London

HAVING been behind the scenes at County Hall and seen how the London County Council does its work, let us now examine the extensive powers and duties of this vast municipal organisation. It affects, in one way or another, the lives of the people of London every minute of the day and night. So enormous is the work of the Council that this book could be entirely filled with its description alone. Even the official references to committees would occupy too much space. I must, therefore, summarise.

§ *Origins of Powers and Duties*

The Council's powers and duties may be grouped, according to the sources from which they are derived, as follows:

Those transferred in 1889 from the Metropolitan Board of Works, as central authority for main drainage, for street improvements, for the fire brigade, for housing the poor, for supervising the laying-out of streets and the construction of buildings, and for the provision and maintenance of parks and open spaces.

Administrative business transferred also by the Act of 1888 from the Justices, such as the licensing of places for music, dancing, or stage plays, the provision and maintenance of mental hospitals and reformatory and industrial schools, duties with regard to county bridges, the

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appointment, etc., of coroners, and the carrying out of duties under the Weights and Measures Acts.

Powers and duties mainly transferred from the London School Board in 1903, coupled with additional powers, relating to education.

Powers directly conferred by Parliament at various times in regard to a number of matters, the chief of these being the protection of children, the licensing of cinematograph halls, employment agencies, massage establishments, motor-cars, etc., the provision of ambulances, museums, small holdings and allotments and public restaurants, and such important services as town planning, the welfare of the blind and various health services.

Powers transferred by the Local Government Act, 1929, from the London poor law authorities.

This last-mentioned transfer considerably enlarged the scope of some of the previously existing services of the Council, e.g., the public health, education and ambulance services, but the chief effect was to make the Council responsible for the provision of all forms of public assistance, the provision of hospitals and of treatment for the sick. For eighteen years the Council co-ordinated and greatly extended these services. All hospitals, however, passed to the State on July 5th, 1948, and the National Assistance Act, 1948, transferred all work connected with the help of the able-bodied to the Assistance Board. (See Chapter 13.)

Existing statutory powers are frequently extended as a result of new legislation. Thus the Town and Country Planning Act, 1932, removed the restriction by which town-planning excluded built-up areas, and thus enabled the Council to take steps to town-plan the whole county. Further and comprehensive powers were given by the Act of 1947.

WHAT THE L.C.C. DOES FOR LONDON

In order to convey an impression as to the measure of the Council's activities, the following particulars are given of some of its principal services.

§ *The Principal Services*

(i) *Housing*—Housing has always featured largely in the Council's activities. It is ever with us. The Council and its predecessor (the Metropolitan Board of Works) have cleared about 350 acres of slums; 102,000 dwellings with accommodation for 440,000 persons have been erected. In addition, nearly 8,000 temporary houses were put up during 1945-48. In recent years the tendency has been to erect blocks of flats within the county and cottages on out-county estates. The Council is one of the biggest municipal landlords in the world, with a yearly rent roll of over £4,000,000.

Under the County of London Plan the Council is now engaged on clearance schemes of very considerable magnitude.

(ii) *Health*—In connection with maternity and child welfare, the Council has 142 welfare centres, with sessions for ante-natal and post-natal cases, child welfare, dental treatment of mothers and infants, diphtheria immunisation, vaccination, chiropody and artificial sunlight. 306 health visitors are employed. Day nurses and daily guardians provide for the care of children whose mothers go out to work. Residential nurseries provide accommodation for 483 children. 12,924 confinements were attended in 1947 under the domiciliary midwifery service. The Council has a well-developed school health service. In 1947 379,000 children were medically inspected and 163,500 dental inspections made. Over 1,000,000 attendances

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were made at the seventy-two school treatment centres.

(iii) *Fire Brigade*—It maintains the London Fire Brigade with sixty-one stations and 233 motor fire appliances. There are 32,000 hydrants, and fifty-seven miles of hose are in use.

(iv) *Ambulances*—It also maintains the London Ambulance Service. This comprises sixteen accident stations and six general stations, with 320 vehicles. They deal with street accident cases, and the conveyance of patients to and from the infectious and other hospitals, etc. In 1947 over 64,500 accident and emergency calls were answered and 311,000 patients, etc., were conveyed.

(v) *Welfare*—The National Assistance Act, 1948, places on the Council the duty of providing residential accommodation for persons who by reason of age, infirmity or other circumstances are in need of care and attention, as well as promoting the welfare of handicapped persons, such as the blind, deaf and dumb and crippled. In connection with this work, the Council maintains twenty-eight homes for aged, infirm and other persons, two homes for the blind, nine hostels for men and women in employment, five nurseries for infants and three children's receiving homes. The total residents at these institutions on July 5th, 1948, was 7,000. Five new homes for the old are being planned; and the Council hopes to provide twelve additional small homes by March, 1950.

All blind persons in London are eligible for the benefits of the Council's Welfare Services. On March 31st, 1948, there were 7,764 blind persons on the Council's register, nearly 60 per cent. being over sixty-five years of age and about 80 per cent. over fifty.

(vi) *Education*—It maintains or aids about 900

WHAT THE L.C.C. DOES FOR LONDON

primary schools in which about 235,000 boys and girls are taught; it maintains, or helps to maintain, 346 secondary schools, attended by over 120,000 boys and girls, and 180 technical and evening schools with 250,000 pupils; and it affords much assistance to the University of London. "The London School Plan, 1947", is an ambitious plan for educational extension to be spread over eighteen years.

(vii) *Improvements*—The Council has spent 17½ million pounds (net) in widening about forty miles of streets in all parts of London. It maintains ten bridges over the Thames, four tunnels under it, and a free ferry at Woolwich.

(viii) *South Bank*—A reference to one great improvement may be appropriate. The Aldwych-Kingsway scheme has always been regarded as the Council's biggest street improvement. Even bigger, and certainly more imaginative, is what has become known as the South Bank scheme, i.e., the area lying between Westminster and Waterloo Bridges (ultimately to Blackfriars Bridge).

By some strange historical accident, the south bank of the Thames became a Cinderella. Perhaps I should not compare the City and Westminster to the two ugly step-sisters, but the treatment of South London has been very shabby on the whole, and entirely undeserved. Until last century the Lambeth stretch was open marshy ground, difficult to build on and rather difficult of access. The river was bridged only at London Bridge and Westminster until 1817, when the old Waterloo Bridge was opened. By that time the fashion of putting everything important on the north bank had taken firm root. That fashion has continued its grip even when everyone can see that the

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north bank is hopelessly congested and overburdened, and that we can only make London a fit place to live and work in if we call in a worthily rebuilt and re-planned south bank to free us from the congestion of the north.

Some important steps have, happily, been taken this century. The London County Council pioneered the development by placing the County Hall on its magnificent site years ago. The rebuilding of Waterloo Station as one of the finest stations in the country was another step forward; and more lately the new Waterloo Bridge, with which I was not entirely unconnected, has added the third point of the triangle of new development which we are now beginning to fill in. Inside this triangle the London County Council wisely bought the land on which great buildings will soon rise, planned and designed as a whole under the supervision of that great architect of London buildings, Mr. Charles Holden. The use of the South Bank for the Festival of Britain, 1951, will open up the area and will be a great blessing to the South side of the Thames. There will be a big block of Government offices and conference halls and other amenities available for all sorts of public purposes. There is planned the long-awaited national theatre and the concert hall and restaurant which the L.C.C. are putting up. It is certainly time that the traditions of the south bank as a national centre of the theatre and the Arts were revived. From the days of the Canterbury pilgrims and Shakespeare's Globe Theatre down to the bombing of the 'Old Vic', this south bank had a tradition and a place in the performance of songs and plays and music which we now aim to encourage and revive before it is too late.

WHAT THE L.C.C. DOES FOR LONDON

It is not only the south bank, but the River Thames which has suffered a neglect and decay equally serious and equally undeserved. For nearly all earlier generations of Londoners it was the river which brought the life-blood through their city: they lived by it; moved by it; had fun on it; and drew inspiration from it. That great Londoner, John Burns, rightly called it "liquid history".

The South Bank scheme will help to restore the Thames to its ancient glories. No longer will people, looking across from the north bank, see a large heap of rubble and a lot of semi-derelict buildings. It was a big day for London when the first pile was driven into the river bed on January 19th, 1949. It was a specially proud day for that half of London which lives, as I do, south of the Thames. It was a day which I, as a South Londoner, had looked forward to for many years.

(ix) *Parks and Green Belt*—It maintains 107 parks and open spaces in and near London, with an area of ten-and-a-half square miles. Full facilities are provided for the open-air enjoyment of leisure-games and athletic sports to suit all tastes and ages, athletic tracks, swimming baths and lidos, boating ponds; entertainment during the summer season is given by bands, concert parties, dancing, fairs, circuses, mobile cinema shows, stage productions and other special attractions.

Complementary to London's parks and open spaces is the formation of a Green Belt of open land round London. It was a great pleasure to me to submit the Green Belt scheme to the Council in January, 1935, for I had long cherished the idea. Grants were offered up to a maximum total of £2,000,000 to assist local authorities in the six Home Counties to provide public

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open spaces and to preserve beautiful country within reasonable distance of London, generally about fifteen miles from Charing Cross. The finance of the scheme was unusual. Financial aid normally carries with it some method of control. Forms of joint management were at first put forward; but, in the end, we felt that it would be far better to leave control in the hands of the authority in whose area the land was situated and to make the grant without conditions. Experience has justified the venture. 25,000 acres have been acquired and a further 50,000 acres provisionally approved.

(x) *Safety*—The Council supervises the laying-out of streets and the construction of buildings, and the safety of the public at nearly 800 theatres, music halls, cinematograph halls, and other places of entertainment. It licenses places where petroleum is kept, nearly 4,000 licenses, covering $12\frac{1}{2}$ million gallons, being in force. It licences 700 nurses and employment agencies, and about 2,000 massage and hairdressers' establishments. It enforces the observance of the Shops Acts (45,000 inspections), and verifies and inspects annually over 500,000 weights and measures.

(xi) *Main Drainage*—In the exercise of its duties the Council maintains about 400 miles of sewers which deal each year with over 100,000 million gallons of sewage. It has a fleet of three steamers to distribute at sea the 1,500,000 tons of sludge produced at the outfall works at Barking and Crossness.

(xii) *Motor, etc., Licences*—It issued in 1947-48 330,000 motor licences and 320,000 driving licences, and collected on behalf of the Government nearly £5,000,000 as fees in respect thereof. It also issued 155,000 dog, gun, game, carriage, etc., licences.

(xiii) *Museums*—The Council maintains the Horni-

WHAT THE L.C.C. DOES FOR LONDON

man Museum, Forest Hill, and the Geffrye Museum, Shoreditch.

(xiv) *Children's Welfare*—A recent development is the formation of a Children's Department to deal with all problems of children subject to abnormal conditions. This experiment will be watched with keen interest.

(xv) *Meals*—There is the restaurants and catering service. This aims at ensuring that substantial mid-day meals are available at prices within the reach of all—for both child and adult. There are 111 L.C.C. restaurants, 430 school kitchens, and 290 school dining centres. The annual turnover is £3,000,000.

(xvi) *Supplies*—Involved in all the services is the purchase of materials, food, etc., by the Council's Supplies Department, the statistics of which reach astronomical dimensions. There are six main distributing depots for some 20,000 stock items out of the 60-70,000 items required for the Council's departments. In addition to the purchase of goods, the organisation is responsible for the maintenance and repair of all the Council's vehicles, and the repair of furniture, upholstery and clocks. It inspects meat, and manages three coal sidings.

Since July 5th, 1948, the Council has been acting as purchasing agent for the four Metropolitan Regional Hospital Boards in respect of the former L.C.C. establishments. The annual turnover of the department is about £8,000,000.

It is clear from this summary of the extent and character of its powers and duties, that the London County Council amply warrants its description as the greatest municipality in the world. A few financial

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details (to the nearest thousand) in the Budget for 1948-49 will emphasise this. The gross estimated expenditure of the Council on rate account is £54,770,000. Its income is £18,451,000, while Exchequer grants amount to £12,418,000, so that the net expenditure falling on the rates is estimated at £23,901,000.

John Citizen and County Hall

FEW Londoners realise how much their daily lives are affected by the work of the London County Council at almost every moment. John Citizen goes through his day with never a thought for the huge organisation that works from County Hall to make his life easier.

So let me take liberties with this book and interpose an imaginative account of a long day in the life of John Citizen of London and his family. It will help me to "bring home" the varied work of the London County Council, even though experiences recorded are imaginary and preposterous within so short a period.

* * *

Directly John rises in the morning he thinks of a cup of tea for Mrs. John. He fills the kettle with water supplied by the Metropolitan Water Board—an organisation on which the London County Council has fourteen representatives, and the gas or electricity which heats the water is measured by a meter which was probably tested by the London County Council. (The work is about to go over to the national boards.) Then John lights the fire, using coal in the purchase of which the London County Council has protected him against shortness of weight. While the kettle is boiling, he washes and afterwards throws away the water. Little does he think that this small act goes to swell the gigantic flood of London sewage, which is carried by the vast and intricate underground system to the outfalls of Barking and Crossness, where it is

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treated and the more solid portion is carried by a fleet of sludge vessels which run night and day to discharge their loads into the North Sea, thus keeping London a wholesome place in which to live.

After breakfast, John makes his way to work, using a tramway system built up and owned by the London County Council until the London Passenger Transport Board came into existence in 1933. Now and again his tramcar is held up by the press of private motor-cars and other mechanically-propelled vehicles—most of which are licensed by the London County Council on behalf of the Ministry of Transport. During the journey the tramcar probably traverses roads which the London County Council has improved and widened. He may cross one of the Thames bridges constructed and maintained by the London County Council. If he had been travelling by omnibus he might have passed under the Thames through one of the Council's tunnels. He takes an interest in big new buildings being erected along the way, thankful that we haven't got to the American skyscraper stage yet—his thanks should properly go, of course, to the London Building Acts administered by the London County Council.

Eventually he arrives at his factory or office. Should it be a factory that handles explosives or stores petroleum, it has to be inspected by the London County Council Public Control Department. Should John feel nervous about getting outside if the factory or office catches fire, he may soothe himself with the knowledge that the London County Council enforces the provisions of the appropriate Acts dealing with means of escape. At mid-day he has an L.C.C. restaurant to provide him with a good, cheap meal.

JOHN CITIZEN AND COUNTY HALL

Meanwhile, at home, Mrs. John Citizen has dressed the children in clothes made from material measured at the shop by a measure subject to London County Council inspection. Off the children go to a London County Council school. John, the eldest, has won a Junior County Scholarship granted by the London County Council, and with its aid attends the local secondary school. His sister, a year or so younger, is still busily engaged at a primary school studying for the same examination. Little Lily, aged five, had an accident while an infant, and has perforce to attend one of the special London County Council schools for physically defective children. At school they will receive medical and dental inspection and can also receive free treatment. The Council also feeds the children at school, and there is a free distribution of milk at school during the morning.

When the children were born, by the way, there was probably a midwife in attendance provided under the Council's domiciliary scheme. The youngest (now at a London County Council nursery school) was born perhaps at a maternity home which was under London County Council inspection.

Living with the family is John's nephew, who has left school but does not go to work because he is suffering from tuberculosis. He has been treated at hospital and is now under the eye of the Council for after-care and rehabilitation. An elder girl had a little difficulty in getting employment; she went to an employment agency licensed by the London County Council and at length found a job in a massage establishment licensed and inspected by the Council.

Mrs. Citizen while out during the morning to do the shopping, pauses on the way to exchange courtesies

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with an old friend who is now in one of the Council's homes for the aged. The sight of an old man, obviously blind, being helped on to a tram, reminds her that the London County Council gives assistance, financial and otherwise, to blind persons, besides helping to train some of them to become useful citizens.

Arrived at the shops, Mrs. John feels some safety in the thought that the weights, scales and measures are subject to inspection by the London County Council. No wonder the assistants look tired with all that running about, she thinks benevolently; she possibly does not know that the London County Council also enforces the observance of the Shops Acts, and the securing of a weekly half-holiday for the assistants.

After dinner, she takes her aged mother for an outing. On their way they pass by a noxious slum which appears on the London County Council programme for early clearance. They take the air in a pleasant park maintained by the London County Council, listen to the band or go to the open-air theatre and then have tea in the park kiosk. Returning, they may pay a visit to one of the museums of the Council.

At tea-time, John has come back from his work and the family is reunited. Their housing conditions are none too good, though the Housing Committee of the Council is now trying to catch up arrears. During tea Mrs. John mentions an idea which has been forming in her mind for some time: "Why shouldn't we", she asks, "become our own landlords, by buying a house with money which the London County Council will lend to us on very fair terms?" John reckons that that wants thinking about—he is not at all venturesome.

JOHN CITIZEN AND COUNTY HALL

After tea, Mr. and Mrs. John Citizen go to the local cinema, which is licensed and controlled in the interest of safety by the London County Council. It is to be regretted that on the way home John succumbs to weakness by slipping into a certain establishment which figures in the return of licensed premises published by the London County Council.

Later, John comes home excessively cheerful at first, and excessively quarrelsome a little later. Quarrelling leads to struggles, and clothes from the line get into the fire. The house is set on fire. Soon, however, the fire brigade of the London County Council arrives on the scene, and the fire is put out.

But poor Mrs. John, so worried by bad housing conditions, the troubles and trials of working-class life, and a husband who, apart from the morning cup of tea, is not always what he might be, at length becomes a trifle demented and has to seek advice and guidance from one of the Council's social workers.

Afflicted by a headache, sad in spirit, John goes out for a walk, but his mind is not alert, and he is knocked down by an omnibus. A London County Council ambulance picks him up quickly and takes him to hospital. However, he succumbs to his injuries; whereafter there is an inquest, the coroner being a person appointed and paid by the London County Council.

Thus ends the story of Mr. and Mrs. John Citizen and the work of the London County Council—except that a friend wishes to adopt one of the younger children and finds that the London County Council has the duty of investigating the circumstances and of safeguarding the interests of the child before the Court.

* * *

Somebody with a long memory has suggested that

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I add these lines which appeared in the *Star* many years ago:

Who guides and guards us from our birth,
In times of plenty and of dearth,
Until we seek our Mother Earth?—

THE COUNCIL.

* * *

And if I meet any more people who ask plaintively
“What *does* the London County Council do for us,
anyway?” I shall know they have not read this book!

London's Twenty-eight Boroughs

THE year 1935 marked the centenary of modern British Local Government, because in the year 1835 the first Municipal Corporations Act was passed. Although the City of London Corporation has existed in some form for many centuries, one can hardly claim that there was one hundred years ago any London local government worthy of the name. There was a crowd of Boards, Commissioners and Surveyors, appointed, self-appointed, elected and nominated by various hole-and-corner methods; some of them straight, many of them crooked; a ramshackle collection comprising about fifteen thousand persons.

Mr. A. Bassett Hopkins stated in his book, *The Boroughs of the Metropolis*, that before 1855 miscellaneous bodies existed for various purposes. "In most cases these bodies were entirely self-elected, and even where in theory the ratepayers were the electors, the process of election was conducted in a hole-and-corner fashion and utterly corrupt. . . . It was computed by Sir Benjamin Hall that they numbered fully 300, with a membership of about 15,000, acting under some 250 different local Acts."

The Parliaments that did something to tidy up the local government of the provincial towns and cities were studiously backward in clearing up the administrative chaos and muddle on their own doorstep in the capital city. For some curious reason Parliament has seemed to have a fear of order, dignity and cohesion

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in the local government of the Metropolis. Even to-day one hears reports—which I hesitate to take seriously—to the effect that 'Parliamentarians are apprehensive at the growing powers of the London County Council, and sometimes stories came to me which almost indicated that some Members of Parliament had a vision of field guns directed at Parliament from the terrace at County Hall! Possibly this explains why successive Governments and Parliaments have consistently refrained from giving Greater London a comprehensive and simple system of municipal administration. And the jealousies of local authorities have not been helpful.

By the Metropolis Management Act, 1855, a partial attempt at establishing some sort of system—though a shamefully undignified system—of local administration, was made. Elected vestries and district boards were created for local affairs; these in turn elected representatives to constitute the Metropolitan Board of Works. The titles of these bodies were uninspiring, as I imagine were the bodies themselves; possibly Parliament with its jealousy of London intended that it should be so. The Metropolitan Board of Works acquired a—possibly exaggerated—reputation for jobbery; and as a sort of by-product of the Local Government Act, 1888, which created County Councils in the provinces, it was decided to establish a County Council in London. It was, I suppose, called a County Council because Parliament had difficulty in thinking of a more appropriate name for the new municipality of London, or perhaps it was because Parliament did not wish to confer an inspiring title upon what was found to be a somewhat important body.

The vestries and district boards, however, continued

LONDON'S TWENTY-EIGHT BOROUGHES

their existence until the London Government Act, 1899, came into operation. Under this Act the twenty-eight Metropolitan Borough Councils were created which, together with the City Corporation, are distributed over the whole of the Administrative County of London. The boroughs vary considerably in size. The number of Parliamentary and London County Council electoral divisions (the areas of which are the same) in a borough used to vary, according to the size of the borough, from one to five. Under the Representation of the People Act, 1948, no borough has more than three divisions, except Wandsworth, which has four.

§ Composition of Metropolitan Borough Councils

The Metropolitan Borough Councils consist of a Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors, their memberships varying from thirty-five to seventy. The councillors are elected in wards returning from two to nine members. Like the London County Council, the Borough Councils are elected every three years, although, provided there is sufficient general agreement, the Minister of Health can by order arrange for one-third of the councillors to be subject to election each year, as in the provinces. There has not been sufficient demand for annual elections in London, however, although there is a strong case for the provincial system. When the London Government Bill was introduced in 1899, it was felt by the Progressive or Liberal Party, who then dominated the London County Council, that the motive of the Conservative Government was to create twenty-eight local authorities with plenty of pomp and dignity in order to overshadow the London County

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Council and to create jealousies between the London local authorities, on the principle of divide and conquer. Be that as it may, there was certainly plenty of friction between County Hall and Town Halls, in which not only members but some officers played their part.

Even after the Municipal Reform or Conservative Party captured the bulk of the boroughs and the London County Council in 1906 and 1907, the trouble did not stop; in fact, to a greater or lesser extent it continued right up to the defeat of the Conservatives by the London Labour Party at the London County Council election of 1934. I never rejoiced in these quarrels between the Municipal Reformers at the County Hall and the Municipal Reformers at the Town Halls, for perpetual friction between the local authorities is not good for administration. Difficulties were not only created in London government, but in Parliament itself on local government questions affecting London. Until recent times, the Metropolitan Borough Councils tended to have more influence or frightening-powers with London Members of Parliament than the London County Council, and this, together with Parliament's fear or jealousy of the Council, used to lead in most cases to County Hall getting the worst of the battle.

It is curious, but it is true, that when Labour secured a majority on the London County Council the relations between County Hall and the twenty-eight Town Halls began to improve, and can now be called cordial. Even between the months of March and November, 1934, when twenty-four of the twenty-eight Metropolitan Boroughs were controlled by the Municipal Reform Party that was the case.

LONDON'S TWENTY-EIGHT BOROUGHs

§ *Organisation and Powers of the Councils*

The Metropolitan Boroughs are as follows:

Battersea	Hammersmith	St. Marylebone
Bermondsey	Hampstead	St. Pancras
Bethnal Green	Holborn	Shoreditch
Camberwell	Islington	Southwark
Chelsea	Kensington	Stepney
Deptford	Lambeth	Stoke Newington
Finsbury	Lewisham	Wandsworth
Fulham	Paddington	Westminster
Greenwich	Poplar	Woolwich
Hackney		

The political parties on the Metropolitan Borough Councils are organised on much the same lines as the parties at County Hall. They also have their Leaders, Whips and party meetings. Naturally, their organisation is not so elaborate as on the London County Council, and the outlook and general political temper of the Borough Councils varies according to locality, temperament and tradition.

The importance of London's Borough Councils is greater in some respects and less in others than the larger Urban District Councils; for example, except for bridges, tunnels and ferries, they are the full highway authorities for their areas, whereas the Urban District Councils are only partial highway authorities. Again, the larger Urban District Councils have very important educational powers, including the school medical service, as primary education authorities. Metropolitan Boroughs have none of these powers.

As with the County Council, the hard work of the Borough Councils is done in the series of committees

HOW LONDON IS GOVERNED

which each of them set up. Their standing orders or by-laws are less elaborate than those of the County Council and on the average their committee proceedings are probably not as rapid. But in so far as it is possible to compare the two very different types of authority, their general organisation and procedure is similar in principle.

The chief officers of the Borough Councils are the Town Clerk, the Borough Treasurer and Accountant, the Medical Officer of Health, the Borough Engineer and Surveyor, and the Chief Librarian. Some have a Director of Housing, and a Director of Public Cleansing. Metropolitan Borough Councils are local sanitary authorities and their public health powers are material.

The work of the Borough Councils, without exception, affect the intimate life of the citizen. A reference to their more important functions is appropriate at this point. Take housing. The extent of their housing operations is rarely realised. Between them they have provided 35,000 dwellings, with a rent roll of nearly one million pounds. The aggregate capital expenditure on housing to the end of 1945-6 was £26,111,805. Street maintenance and repair (not to mention lighting) are ever present to the borough engineer; so too is the removal and destruction of refuse. These two between them easily head the list of expenditure on borough services. The London refuse problem is immense. Pigs benefit considerably from the food refuse, and paper is now a valuable salvage. But the hard core of tins and bottles, ashes and clinker have to be got rid of. Some is dealt with in borough destructors; but most of it is still barged down the Thames or taken away by rail.

Baths and washhouses are still of particular import-

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ance to the individual and, despite the provision of these facilities in new dwellings, it will be long before their importance diminishes. Swimming baths, it is hoped, will increase in numbers. This borough service costs well over £500,000 a year. The public conveniences in the streets must not be forgotten; and there are the smaller open spaces, the disused churchyards and odd corners with flowers and shrubs which brighten every borough. The London borough libraries are a service to be proud of, as I know from personal experience.

The total expenditure of the Metropolitan Borough Councils in the year 1944-45 was £32,403,311. This included the electricity supply undertakings of sixteen Borough Councils, and their maternity and child welfare services. Both these have now passed out of their hands, the former to the London Electricity Board and the latter to the London County Council. I should like to pay tribute to the good job of work which the Borough Councils did in these spheres.

The extensive powers and activities of the London County Council have tended to increase public interest in the work of County Hall. But the Borough Councils have a considerable standing, and much local interest is taken in their work. This interest, however, varies.

The development of the telegraph, the telephone and motor transport, together with rapid progress during this century in the technique of administration, has much lessened the old deeply rooted objection to big authorities covering large areas. During the present century County Hall has, not without difficulties but as a whole comfortably, absorbed the extensive powers, and duties of the School Board for London, the Metropolitan Asylums Board and the twenty-five Metropolitan Boards of Guardians, in addition to

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having become the Town Planning Authority for the County of London. That Parliament has chosen the central authority for these purposes is not without significance.

§ Metropolitan Boroughs' Standing Joint Committee

Having regard to their common duties and collective interests, the Borough Councils established in 1912 the Metropolitan Boroughs' Standing Joint Committee. It is composed of three representatives of the Common Council of the City of London and of each of the twenty-eight Metropolitan Borough Councils, one of whom is usually the Town Clerk. The Standing Joint Committee meets monthly to consider its printed agenda containing the reports of its sub-committees.

The Committee concerns itself with various questions affecting the Boroughs as a whole, and is consulted by Government departments and the London County Council on many legislative and administrative matters in which the boroughs are all concerned, although this does not prejudice the right of direct communication with, or by, the boroughs individually. By arrangement between the County Council and the Standing Joint Committee or individual Borough Councils, legislation on behalf of the Borough Councils is included each year in the London County Council (General Powers) Bill, a sensible and economical arrangement under which the County Council, through its Parliamentary Committee, exercises quasi-legislative functions for London.

The Metropolitan Borough Councils are independent statutory authorities; and, if good feeling is to be promoted and maintained, it is always wise for the authorities at County Hall to recognise this frankly and

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fully. Whatever views we may have as to the structure of London government, it is pleasing to know that, as a whole, the Metropolitan Borough Councils have made a great contribution to the improvement of municipal administration in London. Londoners owe much to the Borough Councils and the important work they do for London.

An account of the difficult work which devolved on the Borough Councils during the war is given in Chapter 14.

London Over the County Boundary

WHEN we pass the limits of the 117 square miles of the Administrative County of London we meet a system of local government which is materially different from that obtaining in London itself.

Apart from the complications arising from the existence of special authorities for special purposes covering one or other of the wider London areas, the system of local government in the Home Counties corresponds to that obtaining in the rest of England and Wales. As is the case with many other local authorities, some of them have special powers conferred upon them by Private Bill legislation which the local authorities themselves have promoted. Except in the case of the County of Middlesex, which is entirely within the District, the boundary of the Metropolitan Police District cuts through every one of the Home Counties, the consequence being that the policing of those Counties is divided between the Metropolitan Police and the County Police under the Standing Joint Committee of Quarter Sessions and the County Council. The Metropolitan Water Board area cuts across all the counties. The London County Council main drainage system serves the following areas outside the Council's area: Acton, Barking, Ilford, Leyton, Tottenham, Walthamstow, West Ham, Willesden, Wood Green, and parts of several other districts. The Central Criminal Court follows the London County boundary in the South and South-East except at one point, but in other

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directions spreads beyond it and includes part of Essex, the whole of Middlesex and part of Surrey. As there are a greater variety of ordinary local authorities in Extra London and a greater number of joint committees, apart from the *ad hoc* authorities of Greater London, the system of local government in the Home Counties is much more complicated than that of the Administrative County of London, for all the twenty-eight Metropolitan Borough Councils, including those possessing exceptional names—the Westminster City Council and the Council of the Royal Borough of Kensington—have similar powers. Each of the five Home Counties—Essex, Hertfordshire, Kent, Middlesex and Surrey—has a County Council, but their powers are roughly similar to other County Councils, whereas the nature and powers of the London County Council, as I have explained earlier in this book, more nearly correspond with those of a large-scale County Borough Council. Moreover, their Aldermen are equal to one-third of their Councillors, whereas in London the proportion of Aldermen to Councillors is one-sixth.

Following is a list of the Home County Councils with their composition:

<i>Authorities.</i>	<i>Number of Members.</i>	<i>Method of appointment, term of office, etc.</i>	<i>County Council.</i>	<i>Aldermen.</i>	<i>Councillors.</i>	<i>Total</i>
5 County Councils (of which Middlesex only is wholly within Greater London).	404 councillors 133 aldermen 537 members	1 councillor elected for 3 years for each county electoral division. Elected by the councillors from within or without the council for 6 years, one half retiring every 3 years. The chairman is elected from within or without the council, annually. He holds office for 1 year.	Essex Herts Kent Middlesex Surrey	31 22 25 30 25	94 66 77 90 77	125 88 102 120 102

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The election of County Councillors takes place once in three years, whereas for all the Borough and Parish Councils and most of the District Councils one-third retire annually.

In Extra London there are three County Borough Councils: Croydon, East Ham and West Ham. A County Borough is the most complete form of local government in Great Britain, although this is less the case in Greater London because of the existence of a number of special bodies for special purposes. A County Borough possesses the powers both of a County Council and a Borough Council; within its borders the County Council of the county of which it is geographically a part has no jurisdiction. The proportion of Aldermen to Councillors is again one-third as compared with one-sixth in the Metropolitan Borough Councils. Following is the composition of the three County Borough Councils; it is interesting to observe that in no case does the total membership of these bodies, possessing considerably greater powers, reach the seventy which is the maximum membership of the Metropolitan Borough Councils and enjoyed by twelve of them, a number which in my view is needlessly large.

<i>Total Membership.</i>	<i>Method of Election.</i>	<i>County Borough Council.</i>	<i>Aldermen.</i>	<i>Councillors.</i>	<i>Total</i>
123 councilors	A number of councilors elected for 3 years for each ward, one-third retiring annually Elected as for county councils. The mayor is elected annually from within or without the council.	Croydon	15	45	60
		East Ham	10	30	40
		West Ham	16	48	64
41 aldermen					
<u>164</u>					

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The second category of borough councils in the Home Counties consists of the Municipal or non-County Borough Councils, of which there are thirty-six in Extra London; this term, Extra London, does not signify the whole of the Home Counties, but only that part of the Home Counties which is within the Metropolitan Police District. The aggregate membership of the Municipal Borough Councils is about 1,300, of whom three-fourths are councillors and one-fourth aldermen.

Like the County Boroughs and Metropolitan Boroughs, the Municipal Boroughs have a Mayor, who is elected from within or without the Council, whereas the other authorities have Chairmen, who are similarly elected. The Municipal or non-County Borough does not possess all the powers of a County Council; the County Council administers a number of services within the Municipal Boroughs. Indeed, the powers of Municipal Boroughs as such are only slightly greater than those of Urban District Councils, the main difference being of a decorative nature, in that their chairman is called the Mayor and they have Aldermen.

The district councils are of two types, urban and rural, and their powers are very different from each other, those of the Rural District Councils being nowadays small. The powers of the really rural Rural District Councils are substantially confined to those appropriate to a rural sanitary authority, and it by no means follows that all their powers are used, whereas the Urban District Council, whilst it is a sanitary authority, has a number of other powers of a wider municipal and "town" character.

There are twenty-six Urban District Councils in Extra London, with a membership ranging from nine

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to forty. In Extra London there are three Rural District Councils (all in Hertfordshire) with memberships varying from nine to nineteen.

The remaining standard type of local authority in Extra London is the Parish Council of which there are three at the moment. The membership of each Council must not be fewer than five nor more than fifteen. The parishes governed by Parish Meetings in Greater London have all gone.

The total number of ordinary local authorities functioning in Extra London is, therefore, seventy-eight as compared with thirty in the Administrative County of London.

It will be seen that, whilst the Administrative County of London has only two types of local authority (the London County Council and the Metropolitan Borough Councils—apart from the ancient City Corporation which has no analogy in the rest of British local government), Extra London contains no fewer than six standard types of local authority. Even this is not the end of the story, for Extra London has a considerable number of joint-committee authorities discharging functions that are not discharged by joint committees in the Administrative County of London. These joint committees now owe their status to the Local Government Act, 1933, which empowers local authorities to establish joint committees for the purposes of many of their functions. They include:

- County valuation committees (functions cease in 1951).
- Joint education boards, committees and divisional executives under the Education Act, 1944.
- Joint children's committees.
- Joint boards under the National Health Service Act, 1946.

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Joint burial authorities.

Conservators of commons (partly within London).

Joint drainage and sewerage authorities.

Joint committees for the appointment of Medical Officers of Health.

Parks and pleasure ground authorities.

Joint planning authorities and joint committees dealing with such subjects as fire, superannuation, bridges and allotments.

There are, of course, the larger special bodies for special purposes most of which cover some area greater than that of the Administrative County of London. I have said enough, however, to show that local government in Outer London is more complicated than the system obtaining within the Administrative County of London, although I certainly do not argue that the latter is simple.

Space will not permit me to describe the work of each of the principal authorities in Extra London, and owing to special Acts their powers, though substantially the same, will vary in some respects. It will, however, be useful if I conclude this chapter with a general summary of the powers of the six standard types of local authorities to be found in Extra London.

The powers and duties of these six types of local authorities, all of which are represented in Extra London, may be summarised as under. It is useful to start with the lesser authorities and proceed to the greater, to start with Parish Councils (there are no rural parishes without Parish Councils in Extra London) and proceed to County Borough Councils, the aristocrats of local government in these islands. In scanning the following lists, it must be understood that there is all the difference in the world between

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the powers of a local authority and the *use* that is made of them.

§ *Parish Councils*

A Parish Council—

Appoints (until 1951) two members to represent the parish on the rating authority, when the valuations of the property in the parish are being considered, but not for any other purpose.

Administers non-ecclesiastical parochial charities.

May appeal against the valuations of its own or any other parish and against the general rate.

May provide a parish room, books, chest for the safe custody of the records.

May utilise any water in the parish for the provision of water supply.

May take measures to prevent the spread of danger from stagnant water or refuse.

May maintain and repair footpaths not being on the public highway, maintain rights of way and veto the stopping or diversion of highways.

Is a minor local education authority for the appointment of a manager of the primary school.

May purchase land for the following purposes: public offices, recreation grounds, rights of way, baths and wash-houses, and burial grounds.

May provide allotments.

May, if approved by a parish meeting, administer the parochial Adoptive Acts, which concern lighting and watching, baths and washhouses, burial grounds, public improvements, war memorials, allotments, land settlement, land drainage, agricultural credits.

May make good loss incurred in the provision of postal facilities.

§ *Rural District Councils*

A Rural District Council acts for an area comprising several rural parishes; it:

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Is the sanitary authority.

Has large powers under the Housing Acts.

Has delegation powers which may be given to them either by regulation or by county schemes under the Town and Country Planning Act, 1947.

May make by-laws.

May promote or oppose bills in Parliament.

May grant certain licences (power inherited from the justices out of session).

May obtain from the Minister of Health, by Order, most of the powers of an urban district council.

§ Urban District Councils

An Urban District Council possesses most of the powers of a Rural District Council and many of those of a Parish Council, and in addition:

Has wider public health powers.

Is responsible for the maintenance of all roads which are not classified.

May undertake certain trading operations.

May aid or supply education other than primary to a limited extent.

Is an education authority for the appointment of school managers; and may exercise powers as an excepted district under the Education Act 1944, subject to population or school population limits.

Is the authority, if the district contains over 20,000 population, under the Shops Acts.

May petition for the appointment of a stipendiary magistrate, if the district contains over 25,000 population.*

May set up a local committee under the War Pensions Act, if the district contains over 50,000 population.

May apply for a Charter of Incorporation.

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§ *Municipal or non-County Borough Councils*

A Municipal Borough Council possesses the powers of an Urban District Council, and in addition:

Is responsible for the Corporation Estate, if any.

Is the primary education authority, if the borough is an excepted district under the Education Act, 1944.

Makes provision for the administration of justice in cases where the borough possesses a separate court of quarter sessions, a stipendiary magistrate, or a local court of record.

May make by-laws for good rule and government.

Administers or may administer the Diseases of Animals Acts, the Weights and Measures Acts, and the Sale of Food and Drugs Acts.

§ *County Councils*

The principal powers of a County Council (outside London) are as follows:

County roads and bridges.

Primary education, except in boroughs and urban districts as indicated above.

Secondary education and further education.

Youth employment.

Public health, including—

(a) Health centres

(b) Home nursing

(c) Health visiting

(d) Midwifery service

(e) Maternity and child welfare

(f) Prevention of rivers pollution

(g) Diseases of animals, except in boroughs of 10,000 and over

(h) Sewerage and water schemes (grants to district councils).

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Fire services.

Town and country planning.

Ambulances

Provision of small holdings.

Analysis of fertilisers and feeding stuffs.

Destructive insects and pests.

Registration and issue of licences for motor-cars and locomotives.

Collection of licence duties in respect of armorial bearings, carriages, dogs, game, guns and male servants.

Poisons and Pharmacy Acts.

Registration of War Charities.

Weights and Measures Acts.

Shops Acts.

Blind Persons Act.

Sea Fisheries Acts.

Wild Birds Protection Act.

Homes for the aged and infirm.

Welfare functions under the Children Act, 1948.

County libraries.

Registration of births, deaths and marriages.

Registration of electors.

Milk and Dairies Act.

Provision of information centres.

§ *County Borough Councils*

A County Borough Council possesses the powers of a Municipal Borough Council and a County Council, except a few minor powers that are obviously inapplicable.

Central or Local Administration? Recent Tendencies

THE question of what should be the nature of the powers exercisable by central authorities, and what by local authorities, can always be a subject for spirited discussion. It is especially so in these days when the whole machinery of local administration is in the melting pot. Between the wars the tendency was undoubtedly for Parliament to place more and more duties upon local government elected bodies. In fact, these bodies have often groaned upon hearing that Parliament had decided to place this or that additional burden upon their shoulders. In the last three years, however, a reverse tendency, which started in the sphere of unemployment some fifteen years ago, has accelerated, and local authorities are now asking themselves quite different questions. Not that the executive powers of government departments have thereby been greatly increased, because the shift-over has been to specially constituted regional or national boards.

Can any guiding principles be laid down? The present century inherited the tradition that the "personal service" functions should rest with the local (in its literal sense) authority. Central organisation, it was alleged, could not produce that intimate touch deemed to be necessary for public relief or hospital treatment, to take two examples. A breach in this tradition was made when the Conservative Government introduced the Unemployment Assistance Bill in the session of 1934 to enable the State to deal with unemployed, able-

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bodied persons. The trend towards the State dealing with the *individual* had started. Let us, therefore, first examine PUBLIC ASSISTANCE.

The Act of 1934 set up the Unemployment Assistance Board to deal with uninsured, unemployed able-bodied persons. Insured unemployed were passed to the Ministry of Labour; and in 1930 the county and county borough councils took over from the numerous boards of guardians the public assistance given to other than the able-bodied. The administration of the institutions for the old people and the work of outdoor relief now devolved on local authorities. Much was done up to 1939 to evolve a humane system of relief. All this meant a substantial piece of work. London County Council figures will illustrate this. It maintained thirteen general institutions, two homes for the aged poor, three residential training centres, three children's receiving homes, nine casual wards and one special institution ("The Hostel") for selected casu-als. Domiciliary relief was given, on an average weekly to about 100,000 adults and children. The outdoor relief side of the work passed to the re-christened Assistance Board on July 5th, 1948. Local authorities were, however, left with the important work of dealing with the aged, infirm and other persons in need of care and attention. On the whole, I think the new division of work follows a natural process of evolution.

Let us now look into the municipal loss of powers in the Greater London area on HOSPITALS. A decidedly mixed collection of hospitals had been transferred in April, 1930, from the Boards of Guardians to the county authorities. In the case of the London County Council there were added the institutions of the Metropolitan Asylums Board. The task of co-ordinating, and im-

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proving, hospital facilities in the London region was energetically tackled in the nine years before war broke out. The London County Council had reason to be proud of the service it was hammering into shape. Middlesex, too, justly prided itself on its progressive hospital policy. As an indication of the extent of the service, the London County Council maintained 100 hospitals with 70,000 beds. It provided treatment for all kinds of illness, both physical and mental, and allowed for a high degree of specialisation in the treatment of diseases and for the development of laboratory and X-ray services. The hospitals staff numbered nearly 20,000. All this great service became nationalised on July 5th, 1948, under the general direction of the Minister of Health. Why? Because, the argument went, the small hospitals, largely voluntary, were finding it difficult to cope with their tasks. Again, some local authorities were not developing their hospitals properly, or were very slow in the process, and the good authorities had to suffer for the delinquencies of others. So there were set up the various regional and area boards which assumed the functions formerly exercised by local authorities. In the process London became dismembered; in the county alone four new boards took the place of the London County Council.

When we come to trading concerns—transport, electricity or gas—the criterion has never been “How does ownership affect the individual?” The test is rather what makes for more efficient management.

The nationalisation of TRANSPORT and GAS hardly affects the London area. Passenger transport over an area of nearly 2,000 sq. miles passed to a public board—the London Passenger Transport Board—as long ago as 1933, and the recent assumption of the

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work by the London Executive of the British Transport Commission was not much more than a change of name. Neither are local authorities in Greater London affected by the coming transfer of gas undertakings. It is otherwise, of course, in the provinces.

The ELECTRICITY concerns of London local authorities were, however, considerable. In the county of London alone there were sixteen metropolitan borough councils supplying electricity, and their combined generating plant capacity formed 30 per cent of the whole. The loss of their electricity undertakings has, I know, been keenly felt by many authorities, but the case for a co-ordinated national system was overwhelming. Incidentally, the area of the new London Electricity Board is much more tidy and manageable than the former sprawling area.

In addition to the *loss* of functions outlined above, there has been some *transfer* of functions between local authorities. The only substantial transfer in London is that of maternity and child welfare, which the metropolitan borough councils have lost to the London County Council.

Such are the facts. This is a non-political book which deals with the organisation and machinery of London local government rather than policy. But I will make a few observations which I trust will be non-controversial.

Never do I see the transfer of functions from local authorities to the State without a feeling of sorrow; or even the transfer of functions from minor to major local authorities. I remember, as Home Secretary and Minister of Home Security in the war, visiting a small ancient Royal Borough in the West of England. Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors were there in the

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old Town Hall, which was itself full of ancient historical relics. My wife and I were much impressed by the friendliness of the civic authorities and all the historic antiquity. As we left I said to the Mayor: "Mr. Mayor, it *might* at some time be my fate to have a hand in the reorganisation of your ancient authority into some other authority. If so, it will not be a pleasant occasion; and I promise you I will shed a very sincere tear on the way."

Nevertheless, the hard truth is that most of the new local government powers since the beginning of the century have been conferred on the Counties and County Boroughs and a number of the powers of the smaller local authorities have been transferred to the larger ones. Moreover, as is shown above, some local authority functions have been handed over to national bodies. Embittered councillors have called it "death by a thousand cuts". Governments of all colours have participated in the process. It is not a party matter, therefore, and there must be reason—good or not so good—for this twentieth century development. The telephone, telegraph, fast motor transport, the general tendency to bigger units of management have undoubtedly led to a belief—for which there is much, though not universal, justification—that larger units of administration give us greater economy and efficiency, better service and officers, and that the public interest is best served. The smaller authorities strenuously resist this view. They argue that they are in closer touch with the individual, more available to complaining citizens, and that their administration is more economical.

Let the argument proceed. It is well that it should. And may the right solution ultimately emerge.

Civil Defence: London at War¹

FROM 1935 onwards London local authorities, like those elsewhere, were increasingly occupied with devising, and later executing, schemes for protecting their citizens against hostile air attack. At first little was done. A few officers were trained in anti-gas measures, and guidance from the Home Office about shelter construction and the treatment of casualties was studied. Work really began, however, when the Air Raid Precautions Act became law at the end of 1937. Before that happened the local authorities had to fight hard to get adequate provision for Government grant towards the cost of the precautions included in the Act. At their request, I led the local authorities' discussions with the Government. We were so successful that later, when I became Home Secretary and Minister of Home Security, I found it hard to believe that we could have opened our mouths so wide.

Besides settling the financial issue, the Act for the first time laid on local authorities specific duties to organise A.R.P. services, provide shelter, and recruit volunteers—matters which until then had been the subject only of exhortations and circulars.

In 1939 the Civil Defence Act was passed, which extended the powers and duties of local authorities to include care for air-raïd casualties in hospitals, besides the fire precautions, anti-gas measures and rescue

¹ In the preparation of this chapter I have been much assisted by Mr. T. G. Randall, the Deputy Clerk of the London County Council.

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schemes provided for in the earlier Act. The provision for the care of air-raid casualties included not only the accumulation of vast stores of drugs, bandages, beds and bedding, but structural works to protect patients and staff. New operating theatres and other special units were built which transformed many hospitals, not formerly so equipped, into casualty hospitals capable of giving full surgical treatment. Nor did the new Act stop with the local authorities. It required gas and water undertakings, and other providers of vital services, to protect their plant; and also made it a duty for all employers with more than thirty staff to provide air raid shelter for their employees.

Outside the Administrative County of London the main responsibilities lay with the County Councils, but fire precautions were the business of the Boroughs and the Urban and Rural District Councils, who at that time were the authorities for peace-time Fire Brigades. Inside the Administrative County there had to be for civil defence, as nearly always, a special arrangement to ensure that the London County Council and the Metropolitan Borough Councils each had duties appropriate to their peace-time work. The former carried out fire defence and built up the Auxiliary Fire Service until the Fire Brigades were nationalised in 1941. It also expanded its peace-time Ambulance Service more than ten times, and started up a completely new organisation—the Heavy Rescue Service—which saved the lives of 20,000 Londoners before hostilities were over. The Metropolitan Borough Councils organised the gas decontamination squads, the Light Rescue Service (earlier known as first aid or stretcher parties) and the Wardens' Service; established First Aid Posts; built public air raid shelters in the streets

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and in strengthened basements; supervised the construction of shelters in factories and business premises; organised the Local Control and Report Centres which were the focal points of civil defence in each Borough; and operated the Fire Guard Scheme, which, as Minister of Home Security, I had to devise to enable fires started by showers of incendiary bombs to be controlled in their early stages so that the Fire Service proper was not faced with the impossible task of fighting hundred of major fires at once.

All this work was unfamiliar to local authorities, and, before war came, very distasteful. It meant that first priority had to be given from 1938 onwards to efforts wholly unproductive in the increase of those civic amenities of education, housing and public health, which it was the pride of the local authorities to foster. When war came, however, the hard thought and painful preparations into which members and officers alike had put unsparing energy did much to fortify an underlying confidence in the public authorities. And that helped the Cockneys to show themselves so toughly and cheerfully able to "take it".

Besides the services I have mentioned, the London County Council operated, not only for the County but for twenty-seven authorities outside, a complicated evacuation scheme which, at the outbreak of war, moved some 600,000 children, young mothers and other special classes out into safer districts. This was a tremendous task; it taxed the skill and patience of all concerned, and could not have been tackled at all without the ready co-operation of three Ministries—Health, Transport and Education—the main line railway companies and London Transport. Recurrent lulls and heavy attacks caused many evacuees to flow

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to and fro several times in the course of the war, but the local authorities coped with it. Experience convinced me that, big as this part of our task was, the local authorities at the "receiving" end had a far more difficult task than we had. Londoners should always be grateful to them for their hospitable aid to our children.

All these things were planned before war began, but new jobs cropped up which could not be foreseen. The unexploded bomb made it necessary to turn people out of their homes, sometimes for weeks at a time. These had to be accommodated in rest centres which were thought of originally as providing shelter only for a few hours. The London County Council, backed by the Ministry of Health, did a great job in transforming rest centres at short notice from places where only an easy-chair and a light snack could be offered to something like hotels with beds, bedding and three square meals a day.

The Metropolitan Borough Councils, in collaboration with the London County Council, made arrangements for the rehousing of persons who were made homeless by damage to their homes. They were first provided with shelter and food in the Rest Centres provided by the London County Council and then the Borough Councils found them billets or placed them in "halfway houses", i.e., large houses which were requisitioned, adapted and furnished so that families could be temporarily housed in conditions in which, while they had certain rooms for their exclusive occupation, they used other parts and facilities communally.

Many other folk who did not lose their homes, or have to leave them, found cooking impossible because

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of broken gas mains and damage to other services. These needs caused the London County Council to start the Londoners' Meals Service—still going strong—working at first with field kitchens to which people brought their own crockery and took the food away. The service developed into a great municipal restaurant undertaking, operating some 200 premises where hot lunches, and later teas as well, were available at reasonable prices.

Another unexpected task—this time for the Metropolitan Borough Councils—was the storage of furniture and effects of people whose homes were damaged and who had to live elsewhere, often far from London, in places where they could not use their own possessions.

The Metropolitan Borough Councils also undertook the immediate repair of those damaged houses which could be brought back into use quickly. The bare essential "first aid" repairs were first carried out and these made the houses reasonably watertight. Later, during lulls in the bombing, further repairs were carried out to improve the living conditions. In this way, a very large number of homeless families who, immediately after a raid, were sheltered in Rest Centres and later in billets, were soon able to return to their own homes if the damage had not been too great.

Later, the Government authorised the Metropolitan Borough Councils to take possession of unoccupied houses and repair and adapt them for occupation by homeless persons, irrespective of the social status or income of the families, though the rents charged for such accommodation had regard to what the individual might normally have been expected to pay.

In all these tasks the local authorities did not work

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unaided. Besides many thousands of civil defence workers, full-time and part-time, the local authorities received invaluable help from voluntary agencies, of whom the best known was undoubtedly the Women's Voluntary Services, or the W.V.S. as everyone called them. For W.V.S. there was nothing barred; from carrying round cups of tea in shelters to packing up clothes for evacuees, they took it in their stride. Equally good service was rendered, in a more specialised field, by the British Red Cross and the St. John Ambulance Brigade.

So far I have described what made up civil defence—putting out the fires, rescuing the injured, sheltering the homeless, but if I left it there, it would be like describing a locomotive without saying a word about steam. Civil defence was a war operation, though civilians ran it; and the first essentials of any war operation are good communications and a clear chain of command. It is to the credit of the Home Office that between Munich and the outbreak of war they planned and executed, with the valuable assistance of the skilled staff of the G.P.O., a system of communications which never let London down. Let me say just a word or two about the civil defence chain of command, and the use it made of the first-rate communications which had been provided.

In any operational service a clear distinction must be drawn between two kinds of responsibility. The first is that of deciding the form of the service: how big it is to be, what equipment it is to have, what proportion of its strength shall be paid, whole-timers and what proportion part-time volunteers. This broad policy for civil defence was democratically settled by the Government through its Ministers and in local detail

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by the local authorities through their Civil Defence Committees. But a committee cannot decide whether one ambulance or two shall be sent when a bomb has fallen: that is the second kind of decision, and it must be made by one man who can decide quickly and whose word is final. The central figure of this immediate, operational responsibility was the A.R.P. Controller. He was appointed by the local authority, and was almost always, though not quite, one of their permanent Chief Officers. Usually the Town Clerk was chosen, but occasionally some other officer, like the Borough Engineer. There was an A.R.P. Controller for each Metropolitan Borough, and indeed for each local civil defence area in the country. These men, each with a small picked staff of assistant controllers, had as gruelling a job as any in the whole of civil defence. Let us now see how they used the communications system to deploy their services.

In every Metropolitan Borough there was a control centre, usually in a protected room under the Town Hall, connected by telephone with the depots and posts where wardens, rescue parties and ambulance teams stood by. As the bombs fell, messages from wardens' posts began to pour in, giving details—often vague and confusing at first—of the location and extent of the damage. The officer-in-charge, representing the A.R.P. Controller, would rapidly assess the requirements of the situation, and messages would flow outwards to the depots, ordering out to the incident the help needed to cope with it. But of course the bombs weren't neatly and evenly distributed, and when one borough was practically untouched, its neighbour might be well-nigh overwhelmed. So the control centres were linked by special lines to group centres—

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about half a dozen boroughs to each group. There were five such groups in the County of London and four more in Outer London. This arrangement enabled any borough control which was hard-pressed to appeal to Group for reinforcements, which the group co-ordinating officer would order on from another borough in the group where things were quieter. The group centres in turn were linked by special line to the nerve-centre of civil defence for the whole of Greater London—Regional Headquarters—and R.H.Q. could transfer reinforcements from one group to another. So the greatest possible strength could be concentrated where the need was most urgent—subject of course to the retention of adequate reserves on their home ground, in case the enemy chanced to switch his attack. Even the Regions were interconnected to a central Civil Defence War Room, so that one Region could, and on occasion did, help another.

At R.H.Q. were located the Regional Commissioners—a Senior Commissioner with assistants whose number varied with the war situation. These were officers of the Crown of a kind unknown in peace-time, responsible to the Minister of Home Security for the civil defence of the various Regions into which the whole country was divided, and appointed on his recommendation. Greater London was Region No. 5, the smallest in area, but the most complex and heavily attacked of them all.

Local government did not take kindly at first to the conception of Regional Commissioners, seeing in them, under guise of war necessity, an insidious beginning of direct bureaucratic administration from the centre which might permanently endanger the ancient independence of local authorities in local affairs. In

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a few Regions these fears were never wholly allayed, but it can fairly be said that in London the Regional Commissioners won the respect of all the authorities in their Region, and that the happiest relations were established between their officers and those at County Hall and the Town Halls. The credit for this is undoubtedly due very largely to the wisdom, ability and charm of Sir Ernest Gowers, who served as Senior Regional Commissioner throughout most of the war. Nor was regional help confined to the movement of reinforcements. The Regional Commissioner system proved to be a most valuable experiment in public administration and their work went beyond the sphere of civil defence. Originally appointed largely to act for the Government in case of land invasion—which did not happen—they exercised delegated functions on behalf of the Government, thus checking undue centralisation and giving valuable support to the local authorities in time of crisis and need.

When war was over Parliament successively suspended the provisions of the Civil Defence Acts, although they remain on the Statute Book, and the local authorities and their staffs cheerfully turned their energies again to remedying the great legacy of housing shortage and derelict schools, and all the other leeway which has to be made up after a major war. Unfortunately, this post-war world is not so secure that civil defence could remain, as we had hoped, a memory. A new Civil Defence Act was passed towards the end of 1948 under which Ministers will make regulations conferring new civil defence duties on various local authorities. The risks have changed and the precautions will no doubt change with them. I am quite sure, however, that the indomitable Londoner will

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play his part, should the need arise, with the same grumbling, cheeky and cheerful determination as before.

Greater London owes a great debt to its local authorities—all of them—for their splendid civil defence work in the war of 1939-45. That I can say with sincerity, not only as the first chairman of the L.C.C. Civil Defence Committee, but as the Minister in charge of civil defence for the whole country during the greater part of the war. And I am personally grateful to men and women of all political parties—and of none—for the support and co-operation they gave me in one of the most difficult and responsible tasks experienced in the course of my public work.

Greater London: How Parliament has Handled its Collective Problems

OUR survey has covered the field of what we may regard as the ordinary local authorities of Greater London. Considerable as this task has been, however, our work is not complete if we are to cover the title of this book.

Just as it was necessary to create the Metropolitan Board of Works in 1855 and allow it to be succeeded by the London County Council under the Local Government Act, 1888, in order that one body might discharge certain functions common to London County as a whole, so it has been necessary for Parliament from time to time to recognise that the real organic London spreads far beyond the London county boundary; indeed the tendency is for each special authority created for a special purpose to recognise as greater London, not the official Greater London of the Metropolitan and City Police Districts, but a still greater Greater London.

The official Greater London, like the City of London and the County of London, has in its turn, as I have said in Chapter I, become out of date; still larger areas have been created for public transport, traffic regulation, and electricity. Ministers have almost ceased to apologise for creating greater London authorities for purposes which, if local government were rationally organised in the area, could have been discharged under normal local government auspices.

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Indeed, some enthusiasts with specialist minds occasionally bob up demanding yet another special Greater London authority in respect, for example, of housing. There are people who believe that the establishment of a special authority will solve most problems for co-ordination, whereas it may have done little more than create a salary list.

All this is no credit either to Parliamentary wisdom or Parliamentary courage. The muddle of local government in Greater London either means that Governments or Parliament wish it to be a muddle, on the divide and conquer principle, or that they have possessed neither the initiative nor the courage to grasp the problem boldly and settle it. If the local authorities of Greater London had been united, if the whole area had been animated with a sense of civic dignity and healthy municipal independence, Parliament would have been bound to give Greater London as much democratic self-government as is possessed by large cities like Manchester and Birmingham. Owing to the present vastness of the area, the treatment of Greater London now on a County Borough basis would not be easy. Indeed, it presents one of the most difficult problems of local government structure in the country. But, in the past, at any rate, the London local authorities have never been happier than when they were having a scrap with each other, each group impressing upon Parliament what a bad lot the rest were, and the number of London Members of Parliament with a sense of London civic patriotism has until recent times been few. So Governments and Parliaments have consistently evaded the issue and have proceeded to handle the administrative problems of this great region on an "as and when" basis. And

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so it is that when visitors from other parts of Great Britain, or other countries of the British Commonwealth of Nations and foreign countries came to see me at County Hall and asked me to explain to them how London is governed, I used to snort, scratch my head, shrug my shoulders, and start an explanation based on the map reproduced at the end of the book, knowing full well that the chances of their understanding what I was telling them were about ten to one against.

However, let us see what Parliament has done with us.

§ *The Police*

Outside the Metropolitan Police District, the police forces in the counties are under the Standing Joint Committee of Quarter Sessions and the County Council, and in the towns are controlled by Watch Committees appointed by the County Borough Council. All the counties excepting Middlesex—which is wholly within the Metropolitan Police District—have local police forces operating outside the District.

In the chapter on the City I have already recorded that the City Corporation has its own police force, but in Greater London outside the City the police are a State force; they are under the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis who is appointed by, and responsible to, the Home Secretary, although he appears to have a certain independent jurisdiction on matters affecting discipline. Including the administrative staff, the total personnel of the Metropolitan Police is about 20,000. The Commissioner is assisted by a Deputy Commissioner and four Assistant Commissioners. In addition to ordinary police duties the Commissioner is responsible for the regulation of traffic on the streets

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and is consulted by the Minister of Transport before orders are made on such matters. One of the Assistant Commissioners specialises on traffic problems. Naturally, Scotland Yard has a considerable knowledge of such matters.

The Metropolitan Police is the licensing authority for taxi cabs and their drivers and for drivers and conductors of public service vehicles, the licensing of such vehicles now being under the Metropolitan Traffic Commissioner appointed under the Road Traffic Act, 1930.

As is the case with other police forces, half the cost of the Metropolitan Police services is borne by the State and half by the rates, precepts being served on the local authorities for this purpose. The material difference in principle as compared with the provinces is that whereas in the provinces the police are under local control, in the Metropolitan Police District the local authorities have no powers over the police whatever. For many years, this situation led to a demand on the part of Liberals and Labour people that the Metropolitan Police should be put under the local authorities, as is the case in the provinces, but this proposal has never been agreed to by the State and municipal opinion is divided on the matter.

In his able book, *Scotland Yard*, Sir John Moylan states that the original reason for the Metropolitan Police being under the State was not the commonly supposed one that the Government wished to have a force for its own defence at the seat of government, but that prior to 1829, when the Metropolitan Police Force was established, the preservation of law and order was in a chaotic state and there was practically no organised local government outside the City of

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London. It was, therefore, held to be impracticable to do anything other than create a State force, and it was necessary for this force to have jurisdiction over territory hundreds of square miles greater than anybody at that time would have suggested as being suitable for any local authority to administer. Nevertheless the desirability of the Government in the capital city having an efficient police force at its command is a consideration which cannot be dismissed out of hand; and since the Labour Party has been in office as a Government, I rather think that Labour opinion may have been modified on the point.

§ *London Traffic*

Work which could be as well, and perhaps better, done by an appropriate municipal authority is under the supervision of the London and Home Counties Traffic Advisory Committee, a body originally set up under the London Traffic Act, 1924, to advise the Minister of Transport on London traffic questions. It continues to function under the altered arrangements for London transport. Its area covers, roughly, a radius of twenty-five miles from Charing Cross, and there are 134 local authorities in the area. In this case Parliament went to the length of placing a local government function under a Minister of the Crown, for the Minister of Transport is, under the Act, the executive authority for the making of orders and regulations as to London traffic. It is true that, except in cases of urgency, he must take the advice of the Traffic Advisory Committee but, although he usually accepts it, he is not bound to do so. As the technical advisers of the Advisory Committee are the Minister's own technical advisers the situation is rather quaint.

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It is not altogether surprising that, given a reasonably sensible Minister of Transport, there have been few disagreements between the Advisory Committee and the Minister.

Although the Advisory Committee was in part created for the purpose of securing swift and co-ordinated action on London traffic questions, it is doubtful how far this has been achieved, particularly on the side of swiftness. So far as improvements are concerned, a certain amount of co-ordination has been achieved, for example, the "yellow band" streets. As neither the Minister nor the Advisory Committee has compulsory powers over the local authorities, who have considerable financial responsibilities in connection with highway improvements, it is probable that as much co-ordination could have been secured by direct discussion between the Ministry and the local authorities. As the Traffic Advisory Committee is consulted by the Minister, the process of arriving at agreement between the Ministry and the local authorities has, at times, been actually slowed down—in some cases seriously. (I gather, however, that during the last three years progress has been better.) On the other hand, the Advisory Committee is a means of getting the collective views of representatives of local authorities on traffic and highway developments over a wide area.

The period between the wars was prolific in the creation of advisory committees attached to State departments. In other than exceptional cases, I personally regard them as a needless complication in administration, a cloak for weak Ministers, and either an encumbrance or a tool for strong ones.

In reconstituting the Advisory Committee under the

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provisions of the London Passenger Transport Bill, I gave it a predominantly municipal character at the expense of making its membership somewhat large. The present composition of the Advisory Committee is as below; its term of office is three years, and the chairman is chosen from among the local authority members:

Number of
Members.

- 1 By the Home Secretary.
- 1 By the Minister of Transport.
- 6 By the London County Council.
- 1 By the City of London Corporation.
- 7 By Metropolitan Borough Councils (Westminster 1, the others 6).
- 6 By County Councils (Middlesex, 2; Essex, Kent, and Surrey, 1 each; Bucks and Herts, 1 together).
- 3 By County Borough Councils (1 each by Croydon, East Ham, and West Ham).
- 3 To represent police forces (2 by the Home Secretary to represent (i) the Metropolitan Police; (ii) County police forces in the London Traffic Area; and 1 by the City of London Corporation to represent the City Police).
- 4 By the British Transport Commission.
- 5 By the Minister of Labour¹ to represent the interests of labour engaged in the transport industry.
- 3 By the Minister of Transport¹ to represent the interests of (i) persons providing or using mechanically-propelled road vehicles within the London Traffic Area; (ii) persons providing or using horse-drawn road vehicles within the London Traffic Area; and (iii) the interests of the taxi-cab industry within the London Traffic Area.
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¹ After consultation with such bodies representative of the various interests as he may think fit.

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The duties of the Advisory Committee are to advise and assist the Minister of Transport on all questions relating to traffic within the London Traffic Area and to make representations to the London Transport Executive on any matter connected with its services and facilities within the London Traffic Area which in their opinion should be brought to the Executive's notice. It should be noted that the London Passenger Transport Area extends beyond the London Traffic Area in the north and north-west and south, and falls short of it in the east and west. It would be remarkable if the two areas were the same!

§ *Public Transport*

Public transport in Greater London is such a huge thing that its provision and management by one authority inevitably involves the establishment of a body which must have the character of a vast business concern. Had there been a general municipality for Greater London it would have been possible for the provision and management of public transport to have been vested in it, but it is not certain that such a huge commercial undertaking would have been appropriate as part of the ordinary machinery of local government. For this and other reasons, despite the general views which I have indicated in this book, I introduced in 1931, as Minister of Transport in the Labour Government, the London Passenger Transport Bill, for which the Labour Government was responsible up to the conclusion of the Joint Select Committee stage; subsequently the Bill was taken over by the National Government, and amendments were incorporated in the Act of 1933 with a number of which I disagreed. The London Passenger Transport Board, before its

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incorporation into the British Transport Commission organisation in 1948, was probably the greatest public transport authority of any city in the world. Its capital was about £110,000,000, and in 1946 it carried about 4,250,000,000 passengers. It had, substantially, an entire monopoly of public transport over the nearly 2,000 square miles of its area and served a population of between nine and ten millions. It owned and operated the omnibuses, motor coaches, tramways, trolley buses and underground railways whose services are within its area; indeed, some of its services went outside the general area of the Board.

The Board consisted of seven members, two of whom were required to have had not less than six years local government experience in the area. The original Bill provided that the members of the Board should be appointed by the Minister of Transport after consultation with the Treasury, but anti-Socialist views of the National Government caused them to make provisions whereby members of the Board should be appointed by a body of Appointing Trustees consisting of the Chairman of the London County Council, a representative of the London and Home Counties Traffic Advisory Committee (to be chosen from the local authority members thereof), the Chairman of the Committee of London Clearing Bankers, the President of the Law Society, and the President of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales. This irresponsible procedure had the effect of diminishing the public status of the Board and removing proper opportunities for Parliamentary discussion about its work. Probably owing to the skill of Whitehall, however, the Appointing Trustees did their work fairly well. The National Government

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decided that ordinary part-time members should be paid £750 a year, but the first Chairman and Vice-Chairman (Lord Ashfield and Mr. Frank Pick) were full-time appointments. It is of interest, in relation to recent discussions on the salaries paid to members of National Boards, that the salary of Lord Ashfield was fixed by the National Government at £12,500 and that of Mr. Pick at £10,000 a year.

As from January 1st, 1948, the functions of the Board passed to that portion of the British Transport Commission known as the London Transport Executive. No alteration was made in the area of operation, but the Appointing Trustees were abolished. The Chairman is now appointed by the Minister of Transport, the first Chairman being Lord Latham.

§ Regional Planning

Having regard to the common problems of town planning in Greater London, the Minister of Health, in 1927, secured the agreement of the local authorities to the establishment of the Greater London Regional Planning Committee, whose first technical Adviser was Sir Raymond Unwin, P.P., R.I.B.A. The Committee was re-constituted in 1933. Its area was the same as that of the Traffic Advisory Committee (roughly, a twenty-five-mile radius from Charing Cross). In view of its limited powers and resources which, for reasons of general policy, the local authorities were not enthusiastic in extending, the Committee did not achieve much positive success. Town planning is essentially related to a number of other municipal functions and should be part of the work of a general municipal authority. This was recognised in the Town Planning Act of 1947. The Regional Planning Officer

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now acts as the co-ordinating influence on behalf of the Minister of Town and Country Planning.

Under the Act of 1947 county councils became the town planning authorities, and the opportunity of dealing with the planning of Greater London on a co-ordinated plane by a few large authorities presented itself. The war had come, but the devastation caused by the bombing of London made re-planning not merely a theoretical exercise but a pressing practical problem. For the inner area, the London County Council started to work out a scheme long before the war ended, and during the summer of 1943 arranged an exhibition of maps, diagrams, models and photographs, the proposals for the planning of the County of London drawn up by J. H. Forshaw, the Council's architect, and Professor Patrick Abercrombie, Professor of Town Planning at London University. A full account of the proposal was contained in a large and well illustrated book *The County of London Plan*.

The authors sum up the major defects of London under four headings: (i) traffic congestion; (ii) depressed housing areas; (iii) inadequacy and maldistribution of open spaces and (iv) haphazard mixing up of industry and housing. Under (i) the Plan seeks to separate fast long distance traffic from local traffic, to re-organise the railway system, to provide means of quick entry and departure from the centre, and quiet and safe conditions for "communities" and "precincts". For the out-of-date, dreary housing areas, entire reconstruction is proposed and this is also the only solution for the devastated, bombed areas. For housing the L.C.C. has approved the principle of the establishment of three principal density zones, generally decreasing from the centre, with variations for topographical or

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other reasons at densities averaging 200, 136 and 70 persons per acre, a mixed development of flats and houses, subject to the density limits, being allowed in each zone. As to open spaces, playing fields, recreation and sports centres, parks, pleasure grounds and allotments figure in the scheme, as well as small gardens and squares and children's local play centres. Finally, there is industry. London is the greatest industrial city in Britain, a hive of small factories and workshops. Development outside the county boundary has been extensive in recent years. In 1938, within the county alone, there were three-quarters of a million people engaged in productive industry. Decentralisation of industry is one cure for the present maldistribution of factories; another is the provision of trading estates and factory flats.

So much for the county of London. The large book published by the London County Council must be studied (if one can beg or borrow a copy) for the details of the plan.¹ What about the outer area? The plan for the inner area must be related to the plans for the extra-county areas of Greater London. Happily, Professor Patrick Abercrombie, the joint author of the London Plan, was engaged to advise on the outer area and his recommendations are set out in *The Greater London Plan*, 1944 (published by H.M.S.O.). Mr. Forshaw had kept in close touch with this scheme and so the continuity of the County and Greater London Plans was ensured.

Most of us can hope to see only a beginning made on these great plans. The London County Council has been able to start on some of the devastated areas,

¹ A shorter account is contained in *The County of London Plan Explained*, by E. J. Carter and Ermo Goldfinger (Penguin Edition).

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and, by a most fortunate set of circumstances, the great re-development scheme for the South Bank has also been started. (See pp. 75-77.)

§ *Water Supply*

Largely as a consequence of complaints as to the inadequacy of the water supply in some areas and its impurity in others, Parliament established the Metropolitan Water Board under the Metropolis Water Act, 1902. Its duties are to see that the London water area has an adequate and pure supply of water at the lowest possible charge. For many years the Board's financial problems were considerable owing to the substantial compensation awarded to the former water companies. It consists of sixty-six members, of whom fourteen are appointed by the London County Council, twenty-nine by the Metropolitan Borough Councils (two by Westminster and one by each of the others), and two by the City Corporation. The remaining members are appointed by various local authorities outside the County of London. Parliament's case for not putting the water supply under the London County Council was that the county area was not sufficient for the service. This, in principle, has also been the defence in other cases where large-scale services for Greater London have not been handled on the usual local government basis.

The Board's operations are considerable; its outstanding debt or capital amounts to about £54,000,000; its revenue in 1945-6 was £6,785,080. Its revenues are obtained by a water rate levied on rateable value; the Board has power to levy a deficiency rate but this has not been necessary for some years. The Board supplies an estimated population (1946) of 6,244,900,

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the average daily consumption per head being 52.1 gallons.

§ *River Conservancy Boards*

As I have already explained, the conservancy functions in respect of the Thames between Teddington and the sea are discharged by the Port of London Authority, but between Teddington and the source, a distance of 136 miles, the river is under the Thames Conservancy Board. This has thirty-four members appointed by Government departments, the Port Authority, the Metropolitan Water Board, and (twenty-four) by local authorities, of whom one member is appointed by the London County Council. Under the Land Drainage Act, 1930, the Board also discharges the duties of the catchment board for the Thames Catchment Area. The expenditure of the Conservancy in 1946 was £168,901.

There was another Conservancy Board for the River Lee which, with certain additions to its membership, also functioned as the Lee Conservancy Catchment Board. The Lee Conservancy Board was a real old-time joint authority appointed by local authorities, the Water Board and the barge owners. The River Stort as well as the Lee was within its jurisdiction. Under the Transport Act 1947, the Lee and Stort undertaking passed to the British Transport Commission. The Catchment Board still functions, and looks after the protection of water and fisheries.

§ *London's Port*

The Port of London Authority¹ was established under the Port of London Act, 1908, the Bill being

¹ For further information about the Port, see *The Law Relating to the Port of London Authority*, by Hubert le Mesurier; and *The Port of London, Yesterday and To-day*, by Sir David Owen.

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introduced by Mr. Lloyd George when President of the Board of Trade. It is concerned with the conservation and cleanliness of the river and the management of the Port, including the docks, from Teddington to the sea. It is the biggest undertaking of its kind in the country.

The outstanding pre-eminence of London as a port can be seen from the following figures. In 1939 London's share of the total value of imports and exports of the United Kingdom was £483,281,203. It dealt with 38.9 per cent. of United Kingdom exports and 25.8 of export of home produce and manufactures. Its nearest rival was Liverpool; other ports followed far behind. The importance of London as a world-distributing centre is brought out by the fact that more than half (55.7 per cent.) of the trade of the United Kingdom in commodities which were imported and subsequently exported was dealt with at the Port of London. Figures are not complete for post-war years.

The Port of London Authority consists of twenty-eight members chosen as follows:

Number of
Members.

- 17 Elected by payers of dues, by wharfingers, and owners of river craft.
- 1 Elected by wharfingers.
- 1 Appointed by the Admiralty.
- 2¹ By the Minister of Transport.
- 4 By the London County Council (2 being members of the Council and 2¹ not)
- 2 By City of London Corporation (1 being a member of the Corporation and 1 not)
- 1 By Trinity House.*

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¹ One member appointed after consultation with organisations representative of labour.

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'The term of office of a member of the Port of London Authority is three years.

The chairman and vice-chairman are appointed by the Port Authority from within or without its own body. They hold office for three years.

It will be seen that the Port is hardly a public authority in the full sense of the term, for the majority of its members are elected by private interests; I have sometimes described the Authority as a "capitalist soviet". It must be recognised, however, that the predominant private interests have everything to gain by the Port giving the best and cheapest service, as the interests concerned are users of the Port. However, I think it is wrong that private interests should dominate what should be a public authority in the fullest sense of the term. Not all the Chairmen during the last 40 years have been paid, but for some years before 1939 the chairman was paid a salary of £5,000 a year. The present Chairman, appointed in 1946, is paid £7,500 a year, which, having regard to the fact that it is a part-time job, is I think excessive. Particularly so, when we remember that the Chairman of the National Coal Board is paid £8,500 for full-time duties. The salary of the Chairman of the Port of London Authority is fixed by the Authority and not by H.M. Government.

§ *Electricity*

Another *ad hoc* authority with a mixed composition existed until 1948—the London and Home Counties Joint Electricity Authority. This consisted of 36 members, appointed as follows: by local authority electricity undertakers, 14; by company electricity undertakers, 5; by County Councils (London, 6;

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Middlesex, 1; others, 2), 9; by the City of London Corporation, 1; by workers in the industry, 2; by the Railway Companies Association, 1; by local authorities who had transferred their purchase rights to the Joint Electricity Authority, 3.

The Joint Authority was in some respects in an anomalous position; and, in view of its composition, there was more "Joint" than "Authority" about it. It was established under an Order of the Electricity Commissioners in 1925 by virtue of the Electricity (Supply) Act, 1919. The earlier establishment of the Authority had been successfully obstructed by the electricity company interests. These, however, withdrew their opposition after the passage of the London Electricity (Supply) Acts, 1925, which, with the support of the Conservative London County Council, postponed the possible municipal ownership of the company undertakings until 1971. Perhaps the major purpose of the Authority was to consolidate the generating side of the industry in London and the Home Counties. In view of the rivalries between the municipal and company groups of undertakings and between the individual undertakings within each group, this was easier said than done. In any case, the passage of the Electricity (Supply) Act, 1926, which really put the control of electrical generation under the Electricity Commissioners and the Central Electricity Board operating on a national basis, had the effect of side-stepping this part of the contemplated work of the Joint Authority.

The whole picture of electricity supply in Greater London has been altered by the nationalisation of the industry. The London Electricity Board functions entirely within the Greater London area, but there

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are three others which serve portions of it, viz.: the south-eastern, the southern and the eastern.

In so far as they are appropriate to the study of how London is governed, I think I have now described all the special authorities operating in Greater London with which we need be concerned. If the reader has done his reading, carefully, he will by now have the general picture in his mind. It is a confused and ragged picture, but the confusion and the raggedness must be considered in relation to the corresponding mental qualities of the numerous Parliaments which have concerned themselves with the local government of the greatest city in the world.

Perhaps I should add that the Conservative London County Council made an effort in 1919 to secure attention to the need for a better system of local government in Greater London. A Royal Commission resulted, but the Council's case was rejected by the Commission, which proposed no alternative scheme.

Local Government Finance

EXPENDITURE and rates are in most areas among the more difficult problems of policy and municipal politics. Conservative majorities have suffered electorally from accusations of being excessively "economical", and have been denounced by their opponents as "skin-flints". On the other hand, a substantial number of electors refuse to vote for Labour candidates because of their belief that Labour rule means high rates.

Both parties, therefore—except perhaps in some of their "safest" areas—find themselves modifying their policies in the light of these considerations. For the Conservatives the problem is how much negation the electors will stand, and for the Labour Party how much reasonable expenditure they will stand. Particular circumstances may modify any general view, but in London I think the electors will respond to a policy of expansion, provided:

That each piece of development is sound in itself, is economically administered, is carefully explained to the public, and is generally popular.

That the party in power has clear vision, a will of its own, and does not cravenly surrender to sectional pressures for changes which involve substantial expenditure.

That the authority is well and clearly led, and that there is public confidence in the character and capacity of its leadership; and

That the total rate is not beyond what the majority of citizens will regard as legitimate in relation to the

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achievements of the Council, and that it does not stimulate active opposition from substantial bodies of electors who may feel that the rate burden is beyond their reasonable financial capacity to meet.

I cannot translate these considerations into figures; so much depends on the nature of the district, the character of the electorate and the degree of their civic patriotism; and circumstances may change according to the spirit of the times. The success of a municipal majority in steering clear of the many rocks in this field of policy depends upon its leaders having something in the nature of a "hunch" or a sixth sense, which, together with sound judgment, enables them to take a line that is a combination of boldness, discretion and common sense; they must keep in mind the problem of making policy acceptable both to the party in power—including its keen supporters outside the Council—and to the general public.

It will be seen that the "psychology of rates" is not an exact science. With all the good-will and intelligence in the world mistakes may well be made. Anyway the problem is sufficiently real to have notably decreased the number of Labour speakers who say "hang the rates"!

The finances of the City of London Corporation are not quite analogous to those of other local authorities in Greater London; so before proceeding to the general case I had better mention the City. As I have previously stated, the City has a special fund known as the City Cash. Its revenues are derived from bequests, property and gifts. The total City Cash income for the year 1947-8 was £333,000. Quite apart from the fact that the District Auditor does not func-

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tion in the City of London, this fund is outside the ambit of statutory regulation. The City is thus enabled to spend out of the City Cash on purposes for which other authorities do not possess powers, and to the extent that City Cash moneys are used for statutory purposes the rates are relieved. Moreover, the Corporation is able to vote out of its corporate funds money for purposes which would be unlawful in the case of many other local authorities.

Predominantly Conservative as the Corporation is, it owns a great deal of property in the City and elsewhere, the value of which has enormously increased since its original acquisition. This extensive application of the principle of public ownership makes the Conservative Corporation of the City of London in some respects a socialistic institution, and I devoutly wish that the London County Council owned relatively as much property in its area as the Corporation owns in the ancient city.

§ Sources of Income

Normally the income of local authorities is derived from (a) State grants; (b) Payments for or contributions towards services rendered; and (c) Rates.

The national exchequer, through the appropriate State departments, makes grants in relief of municipal expenditure. The case for the State grant-in-aid is not only that it affords relief to the ratepayer, who it must be remembered is also a taxpayer (although it is easier to levy State taxes according to capacity to pay) but, equally important, that it enables the State to insist upon a reasonable standard of efficiency in the conduct of the municipal services as a condition of grant. Some grants are made in respect of particular

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services, such as education, highways and bridges, police, housing, health, fire brigade and children's services.

In all cases where the State makes a substantial grant-in-aid, the general policy and the expenditure of the local authority is, naturally, subject to the approval of Whitehall. In 1947-48 the London County Council received an overall grant of about 46 per cent. of its educational expenditure, but in consequence of the changes introduced by the Local Government Act, 1948, the corresponding percentage now received by the Council is about 33 only. This reduction would have been a very serious matter for London rate-payers had it not been accompanied by large reductions in the Council's expenditure resulting from the transfer of hospital and other services to the Government. Further reference to this is made a little later.

Grants towards highways and bridges are normally made out of the Road Fund, collected from the users of motor transport and administered by the Ministry of Transport. Police, fire brigade and children's services grants are under the Home Office; education grants under the Ministry of Education; and housing and health grants under the Ministry of Health.

The above are commonly described as *ad hoc* grants, i.e., they consist, broadly speaking, of a fixed percentage of a local authority's net expenditure on the service and can be applied in direct relief of the cost of that service. To supplement these grants there was formerly a so-called "block grant" which was not applicable to any particular service but was taken in relief of a local authority's expenditure as a whole. An authority's "block grant" consisted of a share of a sum (the General Exchequer Contribution) and was

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determined on the basis of a somewhat elaborate formula which was alleged to measure both the "need" of the authority and its "ability to pay". Prior to the war there was already evidence pointing to the failure of the formula to achieve its object, and the system has now been abandoned and replaced by an entirely new system of "Equalisation Grants" under the Local Government Act, 1948. These grants do not consist of a share in a pre-fixed sum distributed by a formula which ensures that every local authority gets something, but are in effect subventions payable to certain local authorities solely on the grounds of "need". The "need" of a local authority is measured by its rateable value per head of population. For this purpose population is increased in relation to the number of children in the area under the age of fifteen, and in a few rural counties it is also increased by reference to the number of inhabitants per mile of roads within those counties, these factors being regarded as indicative of the special local government needs of the areas. If an authority's rateable value per head is less than the average for England and Wales, it receives a grant from the Exchequer calculated in such a way that the Government perform the role of ratepayer on an amount of rateable value sufficient to bring the rateable value per head up to the national average. Authorities, such as the London County Council, whose rateable value per head is above the national average, receive no equalisation grant.

As a corollary of the new system of Equalisation Grants (coupled with the abolition of the old "block grant"), local authorities as a whole benefited by the assumption by the Government under the National Health Service Act, 1946, and the National Assistance

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Act, 1948, of financial responsibility for the former municipal hospital and poor relief services. As regards the Administrative County of London, it was estimated that the result of the transfer of liability for hospitals and out-relief, less the amount lost by withdrawal of the block grant, was a net gain in excess of £8 million a year, though this degree of saving must not be taken as typical of the whole country, inasmuch as the London County Council hospital service had been developed far beyond the standards reached in most of the rest of the country. Against this gain, however, must be set the loss of education grant (to which reference has been made earlier) amounting to nearly £3 million.

Before leaving this matter of Equalisation Grants, brief reference must be made to a scheme peculiar to the County of London for equalising considerably the levels of rates in the various metropolitan boroughs. Owing to the fact that London receives no Equalisation Grant from the Government, no pool of money was available for rectifying disparities in the rates levied in these boroughs. A scheme, modelled on the national one, was accordingly devised, under which borough councils in whose areas the rateable value per head exceeded the average for the whole county made special contributions towards the local expenses (i.e., excluding the County and police precepts) in those boroughs whose value per head fell below the average. Largely as a result of this scheme the disparities in rate levels have been greatly diminished. For example, the rates levied in 1947-48 ranged from 11s. in the £ (in Westminster) to 23s. in the £ (in Bethnal Green)—a difference of 12s.; in 1948-49 the lowest and highest were 13s. 6d. in the £ (in West-

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minster) and 19s. 4d. in the £ (in Poplar)—a difference of 5s. 10d.

Apart from State grants and rates, a local authority has certain miscellaneous sources of income. It may own property in respect of which rents are received or which it may sell, although if a sale takes place the money should normally be used for sinking fund purposes (redemption of loan debt). It may have surplus funds which it has been able to lend, and the interest earned is a source of income; this, however, is not extensive. Then there are certain services, the cost of which is met wholly or in part by the persons enjoying such services: for example, local authorities are expected to secure payments according to the means of the person enjoying the services or of liable relatives in the case of such matters as the provision of home helps during sickness, recuperative holidays, maintenance in homes for the aged, and so on. The revenue from these contributions may be appreciable.

I have, of course, been dealing with money required for expenditure on revenue purposes. It is, however, the practice of local authorities to borrow money for capital expenditure, such as new schools or bridges or the construction or substantial improvement of highways. The case for this is that the work done is of a costly character and will benefit succeeding generations, who should bear a fair proportion of the cost. Needless borrowing is, however, objectionable because the interest charges are costly: for example, when a local authority borrows £10,000 for sixty years at, say, 3 per cent., the repayments and interest charges over the whole period will amount to £21,622 in aggregate, or £11,622 in excess of the £10,000 actually used. It is

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for this reason that all parties on the London County Council agreed some years ago to a very sensible standing order which directs that not less than the product of a penny rate shall be set aside for expenditure of a capital nature, and that, as a general rule, no expenditure on an item costing less than £5,000 shall be charged to capital account. In the long run such a policy saves substantial sums to the ratepayer. We must keep in mind, however, that a material part of the expenditure of a local authority is met by borrowing; the revenue estimates must, of course, include a sum in respect of repayments of the loan and interest. Loan periods vary according to the nature and life of the work concerned; within whatever period is stipulated the loan must be repaid. It is, therefore, necessary that sums shall be set aside annually for this purpose. Moneys available in the sinking fund (if any) may be used by loaning them out for periods consistent with the fund's liabilities to repay the original loans.

When the probable expenditure and all the sources of income of the local authority, other than rates, have been computed for the next year or half-year, the local authority has to levy a rate to produce the balance. The number of pennies in the pound levied will be so many as is necessary, in relation to the estimated produce of each penny rate, to produce the sum required. The rateable resources of local authorities vary enormously: for example, a penny rate in the City of Westminster produced £41,709 in 1947-48, whereas in the same year a penny rate in the Borough of Poplar produced £2,275. As poverty tends to justify an increased municipal expenditure on certain services it may be misleading to draw hasty conclusions as to

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the "extravagance" or the "economy" of local authorities merely on the basis of the rate in the pound they have to levy, but I have already referred to the new London rate equalisation scheme which has helped to ease the burdens of the poorer areas.

The rateable value of a hereditament is broadly determined by its annual letting value as between a willing landlord and a willing tenant. Certain deductions are allowed. In the case of certain industrial hereditaments covered by the Rating and Valuation (Apportionment) Act, 1928, the rateable value is reduced under section 68 of the Local Government Act, 1929, by 75 per cent., and to that extent they are relieved at the expense of the rest of the ratepayers.

§ Greater London's Municipal Expenditure

The following table gives information as to population, rateable value, and the amount of rates raised in Greater London; it should be noted that the local authorities which collect the rates do not necessarily spend them and that, in this connection, the later table should be consulted:

GREATER LONDON—POPULATION, RATEABLE VALUE AND APPROXIMATE AMOUNT OF RATES RAISED

<i>Rating Authority.</i>	<i>Mean civilian population (1946).</i>	<i>Rateable Value 1st April, 1946</i>	<i>Approximate amount of Rates raised (1946-47).</i>	<i>Per cent. of R.V.</i>
		£	£	
City of London	5,080	6,133,046	2,981,000	48.6
Metropolitan Boroughs	3,104,160	49,248,747	30,253,000	62.7
Administrative County of London	3,109,240	54,382,693	33,234,000	61.1
County Boroughs ..	510,530	4,471,764	3,035,000	81.3
Municipal Boroughs ..	2,978,480	30,030,787	22,012,000	73.3
Urban Districts	1,225,270	11,278,555	8,014,000	71.1
Rural Districts (a) ...	19,640	226,039	157,000	69.5
Total—Greater London (Metropolitan & City Police Districts)	7,843,160	£100,389,838	£67,052,000	66.8

(a) In certain cases parts of districts are within Greater London (Metropolitan Police District). The figures included relate to such parts.

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Here is another table; it shows for which authorities the rates had to be raised and, in classes, the amount required for their purposes from rates, it being remembered that they have other sources of income (e.g., exchequer grants and payments for services rendered):

APPROXIMATE AMOUNT OF RATES RAISED BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN
GREATER LONDON—YEAR 1946-47

<i>Authorities.</i>	<i>Amounts.</i>
	£
For services of—	
London County Council (a)	18,067,000
City Corporation	901,000
Metropolitan Borough Councils	11,639,000
Outer London Authorities—	
County Councils (parts)	18,598,000
County Borough Councils	3,382,000
Municipal Borough Councils (b) ...	6,922,000
Urban District Councils (b)	2,278,000
Rural District Councils (b)	33,000
Metropolitan Police... ..	5,232,000
Total (for Greater London: City and Metro- politan Police Districts)	£67,052,000

(a) In addition to the income from rates the London County Council during the year drew on general fund balances to the extent of £5½ millions.

(b) Including rates raised for special local authorities (joint boards, etc.).

From this it will be seen that the approximate cost of local government for Greater London falling on the rates in the financial year 1946-47 was slightly over £67 million.

§ Financial Control and Administration

Each County Council and Metropolitan Borough Council is required by statute to appoint a Finance Committee. Just as it is the duty of the Public Health Committee to control and administer the public health services, so it is the duty of the Finance Committee to control and administer the finances of a municipality. It is important that this function of the Finance Committee should be fully recognised. Sometimes there is a tendency on the part of the spending committees to resent the “interference” of the Finance Committee.

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I remember a case where the Baths Committee of a Borough Council asked for money for a certain purpose and the chairman of the Baths Committee in the Finance Committee was, quite properly, questioned as to the necessity for the expenditure. As the examination went on he began to get restive and finally exclaimed, "Well, they are my baths, aren't they?" He had to be reminded that not only were the baths the property of the whole Borough and not of his committee, but that just as it was the duty of his committee to look after baths so it was the duty of the Finance Committee to look after money.

If a Finance Committee degenerates into being a mere registering body for the financial requirements of the spending committees, it becomes a thoroughly bad Finance Committee. It must in respect of every proposal for expenditure satisfy itself whether the expenditure is necessary or sufficiently desirable; whether the money is to be expended with due regard to economy; whether the scheme in question is sound in its financial bearings; and, finally, whether having regard to the total commitments of the Council it can properly find its place in a sound municipal budget.

In so far as it is practicable, it is desirable for the chairman of the Finance Committee, in consultation with other chairmen of committees, to budget over the whole life of the Council and thus arrive at a balanced and defensible financial policy. Financial matters should not be handled in an accidental fashion, but should be subject to deliberate policy as in the case of other departments of the municipal service. The tendency to deal with departments on the basis of balanced and carefully considered programmes is meritorious.

For some time before the last war it was customary

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for the then Board of Education to encourage the framing of three-year programmes by local authorities, whilst five-year highways and bridges programmes were favoured by the Ministry of Transport. Since the war policy in this respect has changed. Authorities have been called upon to prepare long-term programmes of developments for each of their major services—education, roads, health services, welfare services, town planning, and so on. These programmes will cover as long a period as fifty years in some cases, and the authorities are expected to indicate the relative order of priority in which they consider the individual projects of each service shall be undertaken. The estimated costs revealed by these programmes are startling local authorities, as well as the Government; the London County Council was advised in March, 1948, that its existing and prospective capital commitments at that date were likely to entail gross capital expenditure of the order of £566 million. Much of the expenditure (e.g., housing) will be income-producing to some extent and will attract Exchequer grant; this, coupled with the fact that the expenditure will inevitably be spread over a very long period, should provide some assurance to the London ratepayer that the fulfilment of the programmes will not bankrupt him in the process. However, it is desirable to have a thought for future Finance Committees.

These long-term programmes of the various authorities throughout the country naturally have to be co-ordinated by the Government departments concerned, involving a very substantial degree of control from Whitehall. The authorities' discretion has been further curtailed as a result of the deterioration in the country's economic position since 1939. The Government have

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been compelled to control capital expenditure of all kinds, with a view to ensuring that all available labour and materials are applied, as far as possible, where they can best be used in the general national interest. The long-term programmes of municipal projects have therefore had to be examined in conjunction with similar needs of industry and public utilities.

The Government has, in fact, declared its intention to use local authorities as agents in implementing its full employment policy, by regulating their expenditure in accordance with fluctuations in the intensity of economic activity in other fields. However restive the authorities may tend to feel under these post-war curbs on their freedom of action, there is little doubt that the restrictions will be of advantage to the national economy as a whole.

The leaders of local authorities should exercise a proper discretion in selecting the membership of Finance Committee, seeing to it that the Finance Committee is not dominated by members who have no sense of public economy in the best sense of the term, or who, by reason of their position or activities on spending committees, will have a bias against the proper exercise of its functions by the Finance Committee. It is necessary that members of the Finance Committee should conscientiously discharge their duties as the persons concerned with the proper control of the finances of the council. On the other hand, the chairman and members of the Finance Committee, and the financial officer, should not be merely negative in carrying out their duties. They should endeavour to understand the views and to sympathise with the proper constructive policies of the spending committees. This will earn for them greater respect on the

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part of the spending committees than would otherwise be the case, whilst, by the examination of officers and chairmen of spending committees before the Finance Committee, everybody should be made to feel that they will not be permitted to spend public money unless there is justification.

The chief financial officer of the Council has similar duties to perform in relation to the chief officers of spending departments; naturally it is to be expected that on occasion the chief financial officer will approach matters with a financial bias; within reason this bias on his part is perfectly proper. It is of great importance that he should not be bullied or coerced into forgoing the proper functions of his office. The rights, duties and prestige of his office should be properly respected. On the other hand, he should not wander into matters which are not his business.

There is a general statutory provision applying to County Councils and Metropolitan Borough Councils that they cannot incur an individual liability exceeding one hundred pounds except on a resolution of the Council, recommended by the Finance Committee. This indicates the importance which Parliament has attached to the status of the Finance Committee.

The Finance Committee should not only be concerned with the direct voting of money, but in questions, whatever financial implications they entail; otherwise it is impossible to pursue that steady scrutiny of all questions which relate to finance. As to what are and what are not the financial aspects of a proposal is a matter on which there will be disagreements from time to time. The sensible Finance Committee will not go beyond its legitimate field of operations by entering the realm of executive policy, apart from the

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financial aspects of policy, otherwise its influence will be destroyed by a coalition of spending committees. On the other hand, spending committees should not be "touchy" with regard to those financial aspects of policy with which it is proper for the Finance Committee to deal.

The practice of some Ministers of evading their critics by blaming the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and analogous practices of chairmen of spending committees of local authorities in relation to the chairman of the Finance Committee, is often a cowardly evasion of collective responsibility. Spending ministers and spending chairmen who wish to stand well in the eyes of the Treasury or the Finance Committee will be just as careful in the handling of public funds as is the Chancellor or Finance Committee chairman. The obligation of care in expenditure is as necessary in their case as in the case of the finance departments.

The 'Might-have-been

ALMOST alone among the great urban local authorities, the area of the City of London Corporation has undergone no expansion.

Over the centuries, villages, hamlets and small towns grew up in the rural areas surrounding the City. Business and residential development went on, and in due time what were separate communities round London grew into each other and into the City itself, which became the centre of a continuous urban development. The experience, particularly during the nineteenth century, of such great towns as Birmingham, Manchester, Glasgow, Leeds and Bradford was somewhat similar. But the difference between the development of the local government of such towns as these and that of the City of London was that the great provincial county boroughs took in the new built-up areas, and the City of London Corporation did not. Had it done so, the story of London government would be very different from that which I have portrayed in this book. The square mile of the City Corporation has remained fixed, and the problems of local government structure in the hundreds of square miles of Greater London outside the City have been dealt with by Parliament and by themselves almost as if the central square mile was in no way concerned with them.

* In so far as Parliament considered that the City could not be entirely isolated from the common problems of Greater London, the Greater London special

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authorities for special purposes have been authorised to function in the City as in the rest of the area; and as we have seen, the London County Council itself has a considerable jurisdiction within the City in respect of a number of services which are common to the whole Administrative County. Otherwise the Corporation has been left alone, and during the most important period of local government development and expansion—the nineteenth and twentieth centuries—it would appear that the Corporation preferred to retain its ancient municipal constitution rather than to extend its administrative area and adopt the more modern form of government necessitated by the Municipal Corporations Act.

Most of the Liberal critics of the Corporation have taken the view that the fact that the Corporation area has not expanded and that its dignities, wealth and privileges have not been shared with Greater London as a whole, is the consequence of the narrowmindedness and selfishness of the Corporation itself. Possibly this criticism is too severe, and reflects unfairly on the Corporation.

It is probable that three main historical considerations explain the persistent instinct of the City to hold tenaciously to its existing rights and privileges and not to concern itself with extensions of boundaries.

The first is the great struggles it experienced to hold what it had. At the time of the Conquest the City was to some extent a state within a state. Successful as the people of the City were in maintaining their civic rights against the royal power, they never felt entirely secure against the apprehensions of the powerful king near by at Westminster who could hardly be expected to favour the City state within the State.

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The second was—although all historical students do not appear to be agreed about it—that the wards and liberties of the City were themselves largely autonomous and, except when in fear of external danger, were quick to guard against what they apprehended as possible encroachments and pretensions on the part of the central City authorities at Guildhall.

And thirdly, in Southwark on the south side of the river where the City owned three manors, it would appear that the people did not like the disciplined, ordered rule of the City Aldermen or magistrates. It is said that the population of Southwark at that time were regarded by the City as riff-raff, and that they were ready, as a rule, to join in any fight against the City.

There is this further point. The Corporation found it impossible to enforce its customs on the suburbs. Here, however, some elasticity of mind in not being too rigid in imposing these customs might have greatly eased an expansionist policy.

Taken together, these elements of the City's historical background help us to understand the Corporation's lack of active ambition for extension of its boundaries. Such ideas, perhaps, came to be regarded by Guildhall as in the nature of "foreign adventures". Moreover, in our days of rapid communication when distance is a small matter, we are perhaps inclined to forget that one hundred years ago Islington, Brixton and Kensington were considerable distances, in time, from the City. It may be that in the minds of some of the members of the Corporation there was a desire to conserve the wealth and privileges of the City within the square mile rather than to take the big view and share them with the spreading London of reality.

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So we can only sigh our regrets that the great City of London Corporation did not develop and expand as it might naturally have been expected to; that it has become largely shut off from the pulsating life of the far-flung London of the twentieth century; and that Greater London does not share in the enjoyment of the rich historical traditions, the civic glory and the dignity of the first British Municipal Corporation, and of Guildhall and the Mansion House.

§ *The Corporation of Greater London*

Let us now try to visualise what might have happened if the City Corporation had developed on similar lines to the municipalities of the great cities of the provinces.

As London grew, the City boundaries would have extended. This process would either at once, or in due time, have made unnecessary the horde of little hole-and-corner bodies which carried on some sort of existence up to the passing of the Metropolis Management Act, 1855. By that date the City area should have included what is now the Administrative County of London. It is probable that thereafter the City would have secured further extensions of area, so that by now more or less the whole of Greater London would have been included in the Corporation area. This, of course, assumes that Parliament would have given favourable consideration to applications by the Corporation for extensions of boundaries. It is not certain that Parliament would have taken that view, at any rate at once, but, in view of the considerable Parliamentary influence of the City Corporation, it is probable that Parliament would have been much more sympathetic to an application by that body than it

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would to an application by the London County Council.

The first Town Planning Act was passed in 1909, by which time much of the uncontrolled urban development of Greater London had taken place. It is possible that if the Corporation had covered a large area it might have secured special powers before 1909; or, in view of its general policy, it might have become a considerable landowner in the larger area. In any case, assuming that the Corporation would have been wiser than the former Conservative majority on the London County Council, we may hope it would have exercised town planning powers much earlier than did the London County Council which, unfortunately, did not commence town planning until well after the first world war. Had this happened, the uncontrolled development of the last quarter of a century could have been made to conform to a sensible town plan. And as town planning is only good estate management on a large scale, everybody would, in the long run, have benefited.

It is probable that something in the nature of the green belt scheme would have been launched many years ago under much more favourable conditions and at far less cost. In that case, built-up London would be smaller than it is to-day, although still very considerable in size. That would have been all to the good, for urban London is much too big from every point of view. For this vast sprawling Greater London is a tragic blunder, a disgrace to Parliament and local government—love it as I do. Had it been kept to a more reasonable size, with a substantial green belt round it, any other development that took place would have been on the far side of the belt within more or less distinct communities, under their own local

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authorities. It is to be hoped that they would have learned the lesson which the policy of the enlarged City Corporation would have taught, and that they would have town planned their smaller towns, surrounding themselves with minor green belts, and developing along the lines of garden cities or what we now know as new towns. In that case, Greater London, under the City Corporation with the Lord Mayor at the head of a great civic organisation, would have been a distinct city, controlling through its own municipality all the great public services. We should not have known the ill-defined sprawl of Greater London that has now evolved, cluttered up with a mass of special bodies for special purposes.

It is not certain whether, in the circumstances I have visualised, Parliament would have created Metropolitan Borough Councils at all. We may hope that it would not have been motivated by any desire to set up bodies likely to be competitive with the central authority and calculated to create friction, overlapping or difficulty in the administration of London's affairs. On the other hand, it might have taken the view, particularly in the days when the technique of administration was less complete than it is now, that owing to the considerable size of the enlarged Corporation area local authorities for local purposes should be established; but it is also likely that the legislation would have been so framed that there would have been the minimum of friction and over-lapping between the Corporation and such minor local authorities.

I trust it is reasonable for us to feel certain that Parliament would not have established the number of the special bodies for special purposes which now exist. The general defence of Parliament for their

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establishment has been that no existing local authority had an area sufficient for such services, but in the London I am picturing their duties could have been assigned to the extended City of London Corporation.

§ *Economic Services*

It is probable that the Corporation itself would have successfully promoted legislation to acquire the water companies, thus avoiding the establishment of the Metropolitan Water Board. Successful as the Board has been, London's water supply is primarily an engineering job, and current administration in connection with such an undertaking should not involve heavy labours for the members of the public authority concerned with the service. As the engineering problems of main drainage are in many respects similar to those of water supply, I imagine that water supply and main drainage could quite easily have been handled through one committee of the Corporation. Naturally, some aspects of the administration would be under other appropriate committees of the Corporation: for example, finance under the Finance Committee and establishment matters under the Establishment Committee.

It is quite likely, following the example of the great municipalities in the provinces, that our imaginary City Corporation would have exercised powers to generate and supply electricity to its citizens. In that case London electricity supply would not have been complicated so long by the existence of a large number of separate municipal and company undertakings pursuing different policies, adopting different standards of frequency and voltage, and charging different prices. Both generation and distribution would have been

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more economically conducted, the service more efficient, and the charges to the consumer less, and so the task of the new London Electricity Board made much easier. There would have been no case for the establishment of the late London and Home Counties Joint Electricity Authority because the conditions which created the Authority would not have existed.

It is possible—though, as I have indicated, this is more debatable ground—that the occasion for the establishment of the London Passenger Transport Board would not have arisen. One cannot be certain what the policy of the Corporation would have been with regard to public transport, but as it was common for great British municipalities to own their own transport undertakings, it is quite likely that public transport would have been a department of the Corporation. Certainly there would have been no case for the creation of the London and Home Counties Traffic Advisory Committee. Traffic regulation, although operated on the ground by the police, would have been, so far as the making of regulations and the provision of signs and signals are concerned, a matter for the Corporation. Its relations with the Minister of Transport would have been direct and the whole problem, which is now confused by the existence of so many highway authorities, simplified.

It is quite possible that as the Corporation grew its police might have grown with it. If Parliament had taken the view, however, that it was more appropriate for the police of the capital city to be under the Government (as I think it is), possibly the City Police would have been merged in the Metropolitan Police under the Commissioner and the Home Secretary.

As the Corporation would have been the town plan-

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ning authority for its enlarged area, the late Greater London Regional Planning Committee would never have come into existence, although there would have been a case for consultation between the Corporation and the municipal authorities on the other side of the green belt for the purpose of securing mutual agreement as to the handling of boundary problems.

The Corporation, as is the case with the present City Corporation, would have been the port sanitary authority; but, in view of the extent of the Port of London and the nature of its business, it is less certain that its duties would have included the present functions of the Port of London Authority, although it would not have been an impossible or necessarily an inappropriate task. The Thames and Lee Conservancy Boards would probably have been separate authorities as they are now, owing to the distant source of the rivers.

§ *Too much for one Authority?*

In addition to the powers of many of the *ad hoc* authorities, the Corporation would have possessed all the present powers of the London County Council, and possibly those of the twenty-eight Metropolitan Borough Councils. If the reader is appalled at the responsibilities of a municipality possessing such enormous and varied powers, I would remind him that the members of the old Metropolitan Board of Works would have been no less appalled if somebody had urged that a central authority should discharge all the functions of the present London County Council. County Hall did, in fact, successfully and without material disturbance or loss of democratic control, absorb the whole of the considerable functions of the

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old School Board for London, the Metropolitan Asylums Board and the twenty-five Metropolitan Boards of Guardians; and it is exercising many added powers conferred upon it by Parliament. There have been adaptations of procedure and alterations in the standing orders to help members of the Council to shoulder responsibilities which, in these days, must be at least double those which were imposed upon the newly created Council by the Local Government Act, 1888. Nor must we overlook the fact that this century has been the greatest century of all in its contribution to the technique of public administration and mechanical aids to quick work and rapid decision. The device of a reasonable measure of co-option for service on committees of persons who are not members of the local authority itself has proved a valuable aid in municipal administration. In view of its rather severe formal democratic traditions, there is little co-option practised by the present City Corporation. In any case, the Common Council has such a large membership that the problem does not arise.

The work of our imaginary Corporation of the City of Greater London would have been very heavy. Though presenting some difficulties I do not think it would have been impossible for its work to have been done through the voluntary services of members elected by the citizens, with the aid of co-opted members of committees. But the time involved in membership might have tended to be as great as that of a Member of Parliament, whilst the solid work done would have been greater. In order to keep as wide as possible the field of selection, it might have been necessary to contemplate the payment of members. There would be the alternative of payment of fares

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and subsistence allowances to members in respect of meetings attended—this is now on the Statute Book.

§ *A Model to the World*

That might-have-been City of London Corporation would, I hope, have stood out, in every sense of the term, as the greatest municipality in the world, honourable and public-spirited. It would have had behind it the great history and traditions of those early citizens of London out of whose co-operation and associated labours the ancient City of London Corporation grew. Its ceremonial head would have been the Lord Mayor as the first citizen of a great population. All the citizens of Greater London would not only have revered the historic Guildhall and the Mansion House: they would have rejoiced in their collective succession to the proprietorship of civic buildings which mean so much in the story of British freedom and local self-government. The Corporation's civic spirit would have been high. The steady expansion of its area, its growing ability to handle new problems, the modernisation of its procedure would, I conceive, have made it a model of public administration. The fullness of its powers, the avoidance of friction and overlapping between a large number of authorities, would have given to its administration a comprehensiveness and a unity which would have inspired every department with a common public purpose. And London would have been a nobler city, for its development would have been inspired and controlled and public improvements undertaken on a bolder and more imaginative scale.

Alas, the actual history of local government in Greater London has produced a very different state

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of affairs, and we have to do the best we can for our great city with the not unworthy instruments at our command. Whether the future will witness a straightening out of the tangle of London government consistent with the principles of democracy I do not know.

I hope so.

APPENDIX I

Advice to Municipal Political Parties

THE Memorandum issued by the London Labour Party on the day following the Metropolitan Borough Council Elections, 1934, which placed Labour in power on fifteen of the twenty-eight Councils is here reproduced. It created widespread, and approving, attention throughout the country at the time, and its principles have, broadly, been accepted by the Labour Party nationally. The general principles set out in the Memorandum have been applied by the London County Council Labour Party throughout its existence since 1919. The advice given should be of value to all parties, irrespective of "colour".

THE LONDON LABOUR PARTY

MEMORANDUM FOR THE GUIDANCE OF METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL LABOUR PARTIES AND INDIVIDUAL LABOUR ALDERMEN AND COUNCILLORS

The Executive Committee of the London Labour Party considers it desirable to circulate guidance to Labour members of Metropolitan Borough Councils as soon as practicable after the elections of November 1. In doing so, it desires to extend its hearty congratulations to all those members of the party who will participate in the administration of the powers and duties of the Metropolitan Boroughs. *Part* of the advice we tender will only be applicable to Boroughs with a Labour majority. The Executive Committee, in issuing this guidance, is acting, as to part of this document, in response to the

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request of a recent conference of Borough Council Labour parties.

BUSINESS OF THE FIRST PARTY MEETING

Immediate steps will no doubt be taken by the acting Chief Whip or Leader of the Borough Council Labour party to convene a meeting of Labour Borough Councillors. The business of this meeting will, we imagine, be on the lines of the following agenda:

1. *Election of Party Officers:*

- (a) Chairman and Leader;
- (b) Chief Whip;
- (c) Junior Whips (if any) according to the size of the Party.

2. *Election of Policy Committee (if any).*

It is a matter for consideration, partly influenced by the size of the party, whether a Policy Committee should be appointed, the function of which would be to initiate, work out, and advise the party as to the policy to be pursued on the Council, and to consider references from the party on the Council. If the party has a majority, the Committee would probably consist of the Chairmen of Committees, together with party officers; if the party is in a minority, perhaps the most convenient thing would be for it to be constituted by the Labour members of the General Purposes Committee, who would be subject to election by the party; or for the party to elect the Policy Committee as such. In any case, the officers of the party should be included in its membership.

3. *Labour representation on Committees and, if in a majority, decisions as to Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of Committees.*

There is much to be said for decisions as to Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of committees being arrived at by

HOW LONDON IS GOVERNED

the party on the recommendation of the officers or the Policy Committee rather than by the party proceeding at once to what might be the accidental results of nomination in the ordinary way. In any case, care should be taken not to appoint as Chairmen or Vice-Chairmen of committees, members who have interests or associations which might appear to influence them wrongly in carrying out their public duties.

4. *To consider as to the date and time of regular party meetings.*

These should take place at a generally convenient time between the issue of the Council agenda and the meeting of the Council. It is important that such meetings should be regularly held so that all members can have a voice in considering the business of the Council, otherwise it may be difficult for discipline to be enforced. Ordinarily, members of the party should abide by party decisions, but where matters of conscience are involved (for example, temperance, religion, etc.), or where the Council is acting in a quasi-judicial capacity, the party should consider allowing members to abstain from voting, or decide that the whips should be taken off.

Members should not take individual action in the Council without consulting the party or one or more of its officers.

5. *Decisions as to Mayor and Deputy Mayor (if any) and Aldermen.*

If the party is in a majority, these matters will have to be considered; and even if it is in a minority it will no doubt seek to obtain a proportion of the Aldermen in relation to its elected strength on the Council. Wherever possible, it is desirable to establish the tradition that *in ordinary circumstances* there should be a proportionate relationship between the strength of the groups of elected Councillors and the *total* number of Borough Aldermen.

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The aim of the party should be to secure the services of the most appropriate people as Mayor, Deputy Mayor, or Aldermen, so that the duties may be well discharged, and so that Aldermen may be a source of *additional* strength, in ability as well as numbers, to the party on the Council. The effectiveness of the work of the party and the best possible service to the public are the big considerations to have in mind.

GRIEVANCES OF STAFF AND EMPLOYEES

It is wise to agree upon and to observe a strict rule that, except in the case of chief officers and other special cases, grievances on the part of staff and employees and general conditions of labour shall only be dealt with on the representation of the appropriate national or London district official of the Trade Union or other representative organisation concerned, or such other machinery as exists with the concurrence of the responsible Trade Union organisations, which representation should ordinarily be addressed to the appropriate chief officer of the Council. Individuals making complaint to members of the Council should accordingly be referred to this decision. Any other policy encourages back-stairs action and weakens the status of the trade unions.

With regard to general labour conditions it will be found that there are in existence Joint Industrial Councils and other forms of negotiating machinery between the local authorities and the Trade Unions. It is desirable for this machinery to be used.

APPOINTMENTS AND PROMOTIONS

Every endeavour should be made to see that the procedure of the Council and its committees in dealing with the appointment and promotion of staff and employees should be calculated to serve the public interest and promote the efficiency of the Council's administration.

The party should agree, and members should be required

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most strictly to abide by the decision, that persons making application to members of the Council for employment should be informed that their applications must be addressed to the appropriate chief officer of the Council, and that it is contrary to good policy for members of the Council to intervene to secure appointments for individuals. Should any members disregard this rule, they would be imperilling the good name of the Labour Party, and would be deserving of the strictest censure and even the withdrawal of the whip.

Should applicants make efforts, when the Council or any committee is considering applications for office or employment, to secure a preference by approaching Councillors, they should be disqualified, and any indirect influence by friends sternly discouraged. No consideration, other than the suitability of candidates for posts, should influence appointments.

It is strongly recommended that the party leader and the chief whip should meet the chief officers and impress upon them that, in these and other matters, members have been asked to act accordingly, and that any chief or other officer who considers representations from members, other than official discussions at Council or committee meetings, in favour of the appointment or promotion of particular persons will be guilty of action disloyal to the Council and to the citizens, and will be dealt with accordingly. The answer of chief or other officers to such representations from members should be that they cannot receive or consider them, and that if the member wishes to complain he can raise the matter on the appropriate committee of the Council.

The appointment of relatives of members of the Council to positions under the Council, even though justified on merits in particular cases, is open to grave misunderstanding. In the case of large authorities, where entry to the service is by competitive examination and appointments are adequately safeguarded from political or personal influence, the objection may not be so great.

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Otherwise, there is much to be said for the adoption of an appropriate standing order on the matter. Following is text of a standing order enforced at Deptford for some years, which we are advised has worked satisfactorily in that Borough:

“No person who has been a member of the Council shall be eligible for any office in the gift or under the appointment of the Council until three calendar months after such person shall have ceased to be a member. No father, son, or daughter, of any member of the Council shall be eligible for any office or situation in the gift or appointment of the Council, or for entering into any contract with or doing any kind of work, directly or indirectly, for the Council.”

If such a Standing Order be adopted, it is very doubtful whether the three months so mentioned is sufficient. It should also be laid down that canvassing for any appointment should be a disqualification.

In all these matters, it is essential that a Labour Council's administration shall not only be above-board, but shall be fully recognised as such by the public at large.

RELATIONS WITH OFFICERS AND STAFF

The relationship of members of the Council with officers (including chief officers), staff and employees, in connection with the Council's business should be one of mutual respect, but not of personal intimacy. Every municipal officer has his defined executive responsibilities; members of the Council have theirs; they are *collectively* (not individually) supreme in the control of the Council. For these respective responsibilities there should be mutual respect, but the relationship should be on a strictly business footing. Members should not expect from or give to officers, staff and employees of the Council hospitality or favours. The place for decisions as to the Council's business is the Town Hall.

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RELATIONS WITH CONTRACTORS

Members should be particularly careful to be absolutely independent of any contractors who have or may have business with the Council. They should be kept *beyond* arm's length, and officers should be expected to maintain a similarly correct relationship with contractors.

MEMBERS "INTERESTED" IN COUNCIL BUSINESS

In so far as members of a Borough Council have a personal (e.g. pecuniary) interest in matters dealt with by the Council or its committees it is desirable that they should declare their interest to the committee concerned or the Town Clerk, and should not participate in the proceedings of the Council or its committees on such matters.

It is undesirable for members of the Council in their private or professional capacity to act in any matter in opposition to the Council, and in any case the Town Clerk should be notified by the member concerned if he or she is so involved.

GENERALLY

The London Labour Party Executive desires to state that the foregoing advice is issued with a sincere desire to help the new Borough Council Labour parties to commence their duties in the best possible circumstances. The Labour Movement, generally, has earned honourable respect for the rectitude of its public work; that tradition must be scrupulously maintained. *If errors have occurred in the past, or wrong things have been done under preceding Tory Councils, a clean start must at once be made to keep things right for the future.*

The Executive Committee could in no case defend improper practices or influences in public administration; indeed, if wrong practices were proved, it would not feel able to refrain from joining in exposure and public condemnation.

The Executive desires to add that the machinery of

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the London Labour Party is always available for the collective consideration of the problems of the Borough Council Labour parties, and that the office or the Executive is at all times willing to give advice or counsel to members or parties in any problem that may arise. Indeed it is desirable for consultation to take place on policy which is particularly difficult or of exceptional importance.

The London Labour Party,
258 Westminster Bridge Road,
London, S.E.1.

APPENDIX II

Principal Public Authorities in Greater London with their Addresses

<i>Name of Authority</i>	<i>Address of Clerk, etc., to the Authority</i>
<i>(i) Administrative County of London</i>	
London County Council.	The Clerk of the Council, County Hall, S.E.1.
City of London Corporation.	Town Clerk, Guildhall, E.C.2.
[] Metropolitan Borough Council.	Town Clerk Town Hall, [].
Metropolitan Police.	The Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, New Scotland Yard, S.W.1.
Port of London Authority.	The Secretary, Port of London Authority, Trinity Square, E.C.3.
Metropolitan Water Board.	The Clerk of the Board, Metropolitan Water Board Offices, 173, Rosebery Avenue, E.C.1.
London Transport Executive.	The Secretary, London Transport Executive, 55, Broadway, S.W.1.
London Electricity Board.	The Secretary, London Electricity Board, 46-7, New Broad Street, E.C.2.

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<i>Name of Authority</i>	<i>Address of Clerk, etc., to the Authority</i>
Assistance Board.	The Secretary, Assistance Board, Thames House, Millbank, S.W.1.
(ii) <i>Extra London</i>	
County Councils—	
Essex County Council.	The Clerk of the Council, County Hall, Chelmsford.
Hertford County Council.	The Clerk of the Council, Clerk of the Peace Office, Hertford.
Kent County Council.	The Clerk of the Council, Sessions House, Maidstone.
Middlesex County Council.	The Clerk of the Council, Guildhall, Westminster, S.W.1.
Surrey County Council.	The Clerk of the Council, County Hall, Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey.
County and Municipal Borough Councils—	
[] Corporation.	Town Clerk, Town Hall, [].
Urban District Council of [].	The Clerk to the Urban District Council of [], Council Offices, [].
Rural District Council of [].	The Clerk to the Rural District Council of [], Council Offices, [].

APPENDIX III

An A B C of the Functions of the Principal Public Authorities in Greater London and the Authorities Discharging Them

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Authority concerned</i>	
	<i>Administrative County of London</i>	<i>Extra London</i>
Ambulance service— Hospitals	London County Council (General Ambulance service)	County councils, county and muni- cipal borough councils, urban and rural district councils
Street accidents	London County Council (Accident ambulance service) and City of London Corporation	As above, except county councils
Assessments	City of London Cor- poration and metro- politan borough councils	County borough and municipal borough councils, urban and rural district councils
Appeals	Assessment Commit- tee for the City of London and each metropolitan borough; thence to quarter sessions	Assessment Commit- tees for county bor- oughs or, elsewhere, for areas grouped un- der schemes: thence to quarter sessions
Baths and Washhouses	Metropolitan borough councils	County borough and municipal borough councils, urban and rural district councils parish councils

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<i>Subjects</i>	<i>Administrative County of London</i>	<i>Authority concerned Extra London</i>
Births (including stillbirths after 28th week of pregnancy)— Notification (within 36 hours of birth)	City of London Corporation and metropolitan borough councils	County borough and municipal borough councils, urban and rural district councils
Registration (within 6 weeks of birth)	Registrar for the City of London and each metropolitan borough	Registrar for county registration areas and county boroughs
Blind, welfare of— Domiciliary assistance and training	London County Council	County and county borough councils
Pensions	Area Officer of Assistance Board	Area Officer of Assistance Board
Bridges (Thames)	London County Council and City of London Corporation	Middlesex and Surrey (Thames Bridges) Committee
Building regulations— Construction of buildings Dangerous and neglected structures Licensing of wooden structures and sky signs	London County Council (District Surveyors) London County Council and City of London Corporation City of London Corporation and metropolitan borough councils	County borough and municipal borough councils, urban and rural district councils
Burial grounds	City of London Corporation and metropolitan borough councils	
Child Welfare	London County Council	County and county borough councils
Drainage— Local	City of London Corporation and metropolitan borough councils	County borough and municipal borough councils, urban and rural district councils

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<i>Subject</i>	<i>Authority concerned</i>	
	<i>Administrative County of London</i>	<i>Extra London</i>
Drainage (<i>contd.</i>)— Main	London County Council	As above, with the addition of joint drainage and sewer- age boards (the London County Council drains large areas adjoining the county)
Education— Primary	London County Council	County borough councils; municipal borough councils and urban district councils in the case of excepted districts under the Education Act, 1944. County council for rest of county.
Higher		County councils and county borough councils
Electricity, supply of	London Electricity Board	The following Elec- tricity boards— London South-eastern Southern Eastern
Entertainment, places of, licensing authority	Lord Chamberlain (Central Area), London County Council (rest of Administrative County)	County and county borough councils
Fire protection	London County Council	County councils
Food and drugs adulteration prevention	City of London Cor- poration and metro- politan borough councils	County councils and county borough councils

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<i>Subject</i>	<i>Authority concerned</i>	
	<i>Administrative County of London</i>	<i>Extra London</i>
Housing	London County Council City of London Corporation and metropolitan borough councils	County borough and municipal borough councils, urban and rural district councils
Hospitals	Hospital regional boards and local management committees	Hospital regional boards and local management committees
Inquests	Coroners appointed by London County Council and City of London Corporation	Coroners appointed by county councils and boroughs having a separate court of quarter sessions
Lodging houses, inspection of	City of London Corporation and metropolitan borough councils	County borough and municipal borough councils, urban and rural district councils
Maternity and child welfare	London County Council	County and county borough councils
Mental disorder and deficiency	See Hospitals	See Hospitals
Midwives regulation	London County Council	County and county borough councils
Motor-car registration	London County Council	County and county borough councils
Offensive trades regulation	City of London Corporation and metropolitan borough councils	County borough and municipal borough councils, urban and rural district councils
Parks and open spaces	Government, all classes of local authorities, and various other bodies	
Pensions	Area Officer of Assistance Board	
Police	Metropolitan Police Commissioner (Home Office) City of London Corporation	

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<i>Subject</i>	<i>Authority concerned</i>	
	<i>Administrative County of London</i>	<i>Extra London</i>
Port of London (docks, shipping, etc.)	Port of London Authority Port Sanitary Authority (City of London Corporation)	
Public libraries and museums	City of London Corporation and metropolitan borough councils	County borough and municipal borough councils, urban district councils and parish councils. [The Public Libraries Act, 1919, provided that the county council should become the authority for all districts where the Libraries Acts had not been adopted.]
Small dwellings acquisition	London County Council	County and county borough and municipal borough councils urban and rural district councils
Small holdings and allotments	London County Council and metropolitan borough councils	All classes of local authorities
Shops Acts	London County Council and City of London Corporation	County councils, county and municipal borough councils
Slum clearance	All classes of local authorities, except parish councils	
Streets— Cleansing, construction, lighting and repair	City of London Corporation and metropolitan borough councils	County borough and municipal borough councils, urban and rural district councils
Improvements	London County Council (for county improvements), City of London Corporation and metropolitan borough councils	County councils, county and municipal borough councils, urban district councils

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<i>Subject</i>	<i>Authority concerned</i>	
	<i>Administrative County of London</i>	<i>Extra London</i>
Town planning	London County Council	County and county borough councils
Traffic regulations	London and Home Counties Traffic Advisory Committee	
Transport, passenger	London Transport Executive	
Unemployment relief— Able-bodied, un- insured unemployed	Assistance Board	
Insured unem- ployed	Ministry of Labour—employment exchanges	
Water supply	Metropolitan Water Board	Metropolitan Water Board and various local authority and company undertakings
Weights and mea- sures verification	London County Council and City of London Corporation	County councils, county and municipal borough councils
Welfare (aged, in- firm and others in need of care and attention)	London County Council	County and county borough councils
Youth employment	London County Council	County and county borough councils

APPENDIX IV.—Some Greater London Statistics

Administrative County of London— City ... Metropolitan Boroughs— Battersea ... Bermondsey ... Bethnal Green ... Camberwell ... Chelsea ... Deptford ... Finsbury ... Fulham ... Greenwich ...	1 Area Acres	2 Population (1931 census)	3 Estimated Population 1947	4 Birth Rate 1946	5 Death Rate 1946	6 Natural Increase Rate 1946	7 Infant Mortality (Deaths under 1 year per 1,000 live births) 1946	8 Rateable Value 1947	9 s. d.	10 £
County of London— City ...	677	10,999	5,490	6.5	13.8	— 7.3	30	6,178,208	11 5	25,742
Battersea ...	2,163	159,552	115,650	23.4	13.5	9.9	42	1,064,575	14 0	4,436
Bermondsey ...	1,503	111,542	59,340	24.0	13.9	10.1	39	672,670	20 0	2,803
Bethnal Green ...	760	108,194	60,320	22.6	13.4	9.2	41	433,256	23 0	1,805
Camberwell ...	4,480	251,294	175,920	23.4	13.5	9.9	38	1,541,738	15 0	6,424
Chelsea ...	660	59,031	51,690	17.8	12.0	5.8	44	1,193,566	13 6	4,973
Deptford ...	1,564	106,891	73,710	25.9	13.1	12.8	38	572,930	18 0	2,387
Finsbury ...	587	69,888	35,260	20.6	15.6	5.0	54	967,548	15 6	4,031
Fulham ...	1,706	150,928	123,040	21.5	13.0	8.5	40	1,255,985	15 2	5,233
Greenwich ...	3,858	100,924	83,060	22.6	11.4	11.2	35	855,428	16 4	3,564
										5,772

Amount of a 1d Rate
1947

Hammersmith	2,287	135,523	118,040	20.7	11.9	8.8	45	1,214,851	16	10	5,062
Hampstead	2,265	88,947	95,750	17.4	11.8	5.6	36	1,549,920	12	6	6,458
Holborn	406	38,860	23,680	14.0	13.8	0.2	40	1,424,236	14	0	5,934
Islington	3,092	321,795	238,630	23.3	13.0	10.3	39	2,023,140	15	0	8,430
Kensington	2,290	180,677	167,610	18.2	12.3	5.9	49*	2,982,373	14	6	12,427
Lambeth	4,083	296,147	224,890	22.9	12.4	10.5	36	2,208,901	15	4	9,204
Lewisham	7,015	219,953	223,220	21.7	10.7	11.0	33	1,732,948	18	8	7,221
Paddington	1,357	144,923	127,920	20.3	13.0	7.3	47	1,743,270	16	6	7,264
Poplar	2,331	155,089	74,050	25.7	13.1	12.6	30	558,698	22	4	3,228
St. Marylebone	1,473	97,627	77,260	13.1	11.5	1.6	37	3,177,802	12	6	13,241
St. Pancras	2,694	198,133	137,150	19.3	13.3	6.0	38	2,071,629	14	0	8,632
Shoreditch	658	97,042	44,960	23.4	14.4	9.0	32	630,398	18	0	2,627
Southwark	1,132	171,695	92,590	24.3	15.8	8.5	46	1,039,771	16	8.4	4,332
Stepney	1,766	225,238	100,450	22.6	14.8	7.8	51	1,237,162	18	6	5,155
Stoke Newington	864	51,208	46,200	21.9	11.5	10.4	37	407,109	17	6	1,696
Wandsworth	9,107	353,110	332,650	20.2	12.1	8.1	33	3,281,810	15	4	13,674
Westminster	2,503	129,579	103,430	15.1	11.3	3.8	40	9,799,655	11	0	40,832
Woolwich	8,282	146,881	140,710	21.6	11.4	10.2	31	1,225,006	18	9	5,104
Administrative County Total	74,850	4,397,003	3,328,340	21.2	12.6	8.6	38	54,418,059	12	6 (average)	226,742
Extra London— Middlesex County	148,691	1,638,728	1,958,000 (1945)	17.9 (1948)	10.8 (1948)	7.1 (1948)	34 (1948)	22,285,594	—	—	92,856
County Boroughs— Croydon	12,672	233,108	244,070	20.6	11.5	9.1	31	2,515,408	15	0	10,480
East Ham	3,324	142,394	119,640	22.7	10.8	11.9	31	726,104	21	6	3,025
West Ham	4,689	294,278	172,890	26.8	11.7	15.1	33	1,317,309	23	0	5,488
Greater London	470,791	8,221,699	8,244,370	—	—	—	—	101,081,293	—	—	421,172

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